

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

# High Ideals

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# High Ideals

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EDIT

## COVER PICTURE

UNDER THE NEW MULTIPLE-GROUP PLAN FOR A CONGREGATIONAL LUTHER LEAGUE, CHOIRS ARE TO BE ENCOURAGED AS INTEREST GROUPS IN THE TOTAL ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP. (IF YOU HAVE NOT HEARD OF THE "MULTIPLE GROUP PLAN" WRITE FOR A FREE COPY OF THE NEW PAMPHLET "HOW TO ORGANIZE A LUTHER LEAGUE" FROM THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA.) THE TOPICS BEGINNING ON PAGES 34, 50, AND 54 LEND THEMSELVES ESPECIALLY TO THE USE OF A CHOIR. (Cover picture by *Three Lions*.)

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# Advice for Advisors

By ROBERT A. BECKSTROM

## Evangelism is your big job

**E**VANGELISM in your Luther League is like athletics—and your job is to coach. Sometimes your participants will work individually, as in track and tennis. Other times they will work in a team, as in baseball or football. No matter how they play the game, they will need a coach who can offer help that they can't give themselves. The athletics coach never plays. He stands on the sidelines to appraise the game and give needed advice. That's where you fit in.

You may never have been in an evangelism program yourself. But don't let that worry you. If you familiarize yourself with the following suggestions and ideas, you will have a substantial basis for advising your leaguers.

First, let's set down some ABC's for Luther League evangelism:

A. All Luther leaguers can be evangelists.

B. Basically evangelism has three distinct phases.

C. Conscientious evangelism must be a never-ending process.

If we consider these points one at a time we shall pretty well cover the fundamentals of Luther League evangelism.

### Leaguers can witness

Every Christian can witness to his faith in Christ. Whenever someone says, "But just can't talk to other people about

God," that person either needs a little help in learning how to express his faith, or he is manufacturing an alibi. The first reason is probably most prevalent in your Luther League.

To be a good evangelist, you do not have to be a glib speaker. In fact, the smoothest talkers sometimes do more damage for the cause of the church than do those who stutter out a few words that seem all mixed up. Any words spoken sincerely and in good taste can effectively further Christ's kingdom.

Often a dozen words spoken by a young person are more far-reaching than 10,000 by a minister. It is a basic part of our faith that everyone, no matter how inexperienced, can bear a witness to the love of Christ. Help your leaguers to realize this.

### Prepare your leaguers

Perhaps now you are asking the question, just what is evangelism? If we divide evangelism activity into three parts, we shall be able to understand the meaning of the word more clearly.

The first phase is called *pre-evangelism*. Before we can actually invite people to come to church and to learn about Christ, we must make certain preparations. These include not only listing prospects, organizing visitation teams, and various other essentials, but—more

important—preparing ourselves spiritually. Some leaguers are more ready than others to be evangelists. But the experienced and inexperienced youth can effectively prepare together for this all-important task.

What a person believes is fundamental to his success as an evangelist. If a person does not understand why he attends church or why he calls Christ "Saviour" he will have a mighty difficult time trying to tell anyone else. That does not mean, however, that one must be an expert on theology.

A good discussion period will often crystallize the leaguers' beliefs and put them into words they can use when talking to others. Doubts and mistaken ideas, too, might be cleared up in such a pre-evangelism discussion.

It's true that discussions can raise more questions than they answer. This, however, should be taken as an encouraging sign. When thought has been stimulated, it's time to go out and invite others to come and learn with you.

Now let's focus on the most important element in evangelism preparation—prayer. This cannot be overemphasized. Unless there is deliberate and earnest prayer, all the rest of evangelism is fruitless. God cannot use us as he would unless we pray. Therefore, much time in preparation for evangelism must be spent in prayer.

Prayers should be offered, too, just before talking to someone about Christ. That opens up the channel for God to speak through us as human beings. Pray and emphasize prayer to your leaguers.

Next, help your leaguers achieve the essential attitudes in evangelism. In his book *Effective Evangelism* George Sweazey lists six. He says that there must be:

1. A genuine liking for people.
2. A true sense of modesty.
3. Tact in speaking to people.
4. A clean life that shows you believe what you say.
5. Enthusiasm for our church and our faith—and this cannot be pretended.
6. Much patience.

If the person witnessing to his faith fails completely in any one of these attitudes his effectiveness will be hampered. Help your leaguers realize, however, that none of us is strong in all of these attitudes. A weakness in one or two of them should be considered as a challenge, not a discouragement. A little clear thinking on each of these points should put us in the right frame of mind to do an effective work as an evangelist.

Just one more word about personal preparation. Adequately preparing ourselves for evangelism is like studying music. Before we can play a Beethoven sonata we must play the scales and do elementary exercises. But these exercises and scales need not be perfected before we can begin to work on the sonata. Sometimes the best way to improve scales is to work on a piece.

It's the same way with evangelism. Some of these things are learned as we apply them to actual evangelism experiences. Show your leaguers that in evangelism they learn by doing.

### Contact-evangelism

In contact-evangelism the Christian young person comes in contact with the person outside of the church and starts the current of the Holy Spirit flowing. This is the heart of evangelism. All the preparation and follow-up point directly to that all-important *contact* with the *non-Christian*. Unless the contact is positively made, all the rest is mere triviality.

It is so easy to spend all our time publicizing our evangelism program, organizing it, preparing ourselves, getting others to help, and planning a dozen other items connected with it, just to call on a few Christians who only need to be encouraged to take a more active part in

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the church. We exhaust ourselves increasing attendance at our organizations by contacting those who are already church members—while the unchurched still remain without Christ because no one has contacted them.

Is your league guilty of this? If not, you have an unusual group. This is one of the easiest pitfalls in the whole work of evangelism. As an advisor, you must view your league's evangelism program to see if Christ is really being brought to those outside. If your program falls down here, better get out front in a hurry and pull it to its feet.

Keeping church members active is important. But there is no substitute for personal contact with those outside the church. Anything short of that is not real evangelism.

### **Your follow-up**

Your follow-up is termed *post-evangelism*. Leagues often overlook this phase because they like to take an after-evangelism vacation. But that is a pretty dangerous time for a vacation.

Follow-up is mighty important in determining whether or not the new Christian or the reclaimed Christian will stick with his decision.

Actually there are two phases to the follow-up: Following-up an unsuccessful contact, and following-up a successful one. In the first case it includes:

1. Contacting the person again.
2. Making a special effort to show the person how much your faith means to you.
3. Praying individually and with others that the Holy Spirit will open up that person's heart to Christ.

In the second case, it includes:

1. Getting the new person to take part in organizational activities as well as worship services.
2. Making him feel welcome and appreciated.
3. Reminding him how much he is missed if he becomes lax in his attendance.

4. Giving him a definite job that makes him feel that he is an important part of Christ's church.

These are pretty familiar to us, so we needn't elaborate on them. We should, however, keep reminding ourselves and the leaguers that these things are all important. Failure to practice them may mean the loss of some persons who might otherwise be kept in the kingdom.

### **A never-ending process**

Evangelism is not just a visitation program we trot out once or twice a year—although that is an important part of it. The campaign for lost souls continues always. Sometimes we work by two's (just a leaguer and God) At other times we work in groups as in a Luther League evangelism program. But the important thing is that the process never stops. When it does, we are sliding backwards as effective servants of Christ. If you as coach of your team of young Christians will remind them of this now and then—especially when the group is discussing evangelism—you will be doing your job well. It's not an easy one, because no important job is easy. But remember, with the help of the Holy Spirit your league can do it.

Here are materials for you:

"Evangelism Is Your 'Big Job'" for Luther League Handbook. Order from the Luther League of America, 1228 Spruce St., Room 825, Philadelphia, Pa. One copy free if you mention this article.

*Effective Evangelism*. By George E. Sweazey. Order from the United Lutheran Publication House. \$3.50. (This book offers a thorough treatment aimed at leaders.)

"Instructions for Youth Visitors." Order from the Luther League of America. Free.

"Christ for Those Outside." By T. A. Kantonen. Eleven theses of evangelism. Order from the Luther League of America. Free.

# don" let them bully you

by mary wehn

## here are some situations to test your moral stamina

**S**O your league has trouble with discussions! Then this is the topic for you. The leader of this question-bee (for that's what it is) should be a *leader*, not a *dictator*. It's your job to get the opinions of the leaguers.

Choose questions that the leaguers are thinking and talking about.

Too often a discussion falls flat on its face because the leader asks questions that have obvious answers—like: Does the church need more pastors? Or questions that the intermediates have had no reason to think about—like: Does our church need a new organ?

The questions in the topic have no *one* right answer. Sometimes you may not be able to solve a problem at all. The best questions are those that you yourself might not be able to answer. Your leaguers, however, might surprise you on these toughies.

If the problem situations described below don't quite fit your leaguers, change

them so they will. Keep the situations as realistic as possible.

When one of the following questions "catches" and your league gets into a hot discussion over it, then you might forget about the rest and concentrate on that one problem.

Don't stop your discussions when you've decided what you shouldn't do. Try to agree on a good course of action. Remember that our Lord didn't stop when he said, Don't hate; don't kill; don't gossip. He told us what we must do: Love, help, follow him.

### Calling your imagination

Now's the time to fire up your imagination in planning your program. The following six problem situations could be presented as skits. Then let all the leaguers help seek solutions to each problem.

Or you might set up a panel discussion. This would work quite effectively. In the program, you will want to give a short





When everyone starts hammering away at you it's tough to stick by what you think is right.

introduction, explaining the purpose of the discussion and telling why we must stand up for our beliefs.

Just before your program begins, check our meeting room. Chairs in order? This isn't a classroom—let's arrange the chairs in a not-too-big circle so everyone can see everyone else. Hymnals ready? Worship center arranged? Pianist primed with the hymn numbers?

### Question! Question!

1. Susy was having a bang-up time at party one Friday night. When she suddenly mentioned that it was time for her to go home, all the gang urged her to stay beyond the deadline her parents had given her. "Tell your folks that you forgot to look at the clock," said Norm. "Oh, just say none of the rest of us had to leave so early," piped up Ann. What could Susy have done without being called a "party-pooper?"

2. Let's pretend that after Luther

League tonight, seven or eight of us will stop at the corner soda shop for a snack. Barbara decides that she wants a spoon to add to her collection. Joe suggests that the gang see how many glasses we could swipe without being caught. What will you do?

3. Johnny has been invited to a birthday party next week. He knows that his friends will want to play "Flashlight" and other kissing games. He thinks such games are rather foolish and childish. Should he stay home? Or if he goes to the party should he play anyway?

4. Miss Smucker just popped a surprise test in math. The girl in front of

### Topic aim

To encourage your leaguers to stick up for their beliefs and to help them discover how to do it.



you, who is a whiz at math, has passed back to you her answers. Everyone else is cheating. And you're sure you'll get the lowest mark in class if you depend on your own feeble brain. Will you copy her answers?

5. You are chairman of the Junior Red Cross drive for your school. You've chosen George to be your assistant chairman. But none of the other kids will help because they think that George is weird. Should you replace George so the drive won't fail? Or should you ignore those who don't like him and do the best you can? Or what?

6. Remember the story about the boy whose companions were cursing and telling dirty stories? The young hero stood up and said smugly, "I will not tolerate such language," and marched out of the room. His companions were not ashamed of themselves, did not mend their evil ways, and lived happily ever after. Can you picture yourself doing the same thing? What can you do when your friends swear and tell dirty jokes (especially when you want to hear the jokes)? What do you suggest?

### Help your discussion grow

The Bible will help your leaguers solve some of these problems. Read what Jesus has to say about swearing in Matthew 5:33-37 and Matthew 15:10, 11. A clue to the answer to cheating might be found in Luke 16:10. A Bible concordance will be a help in looking up other references.

Often a gang will do "bad" things because they can't think of anything more interesting to do. Sometimes all they need is a good suggestion. Put your imagination to work and dream up something exciting to do. For instance, if the gang is at your house and someone pulls out a bottle of beer, give him a glass of a weird drink you have concocted out of coconut and pineapple juice. Let the crowd guess the ingredients.

You can often avoid unpleasantness

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merely by turning attention to something else. *But*—don't be afraid to stand up for your beliefs! Set the Christian example yourself and encourage others to do the same. If the crowd is doing something that you know is wrong, let them know it is wrong and why. Some of the people you least expect will be on your side. Even if you are the only one who disapproves, you know that trying to follow God's will is more important than having your friends' approval.

There is a great danger when announcing evil to ridicule the people involved rather than to condemn their actions. Every human being is priceless in the sight of God and should be treated accordingly. You are trying to help them grow in their Christian faith. This is done by making them feel worthless. If people know that you are their friend no matter what they do and that as their friend you are concerned about them.

Being a Christian is a challenge. It calls for strong, devoted followers who know what they believe and are willing to fight it.

### Your league at worship

SUGGESTED HYMNS: "Onward, Christian Soldiers," "Yield Not to Temptation," "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus," and "Christian, Dost Thou See Them."

RESPONSIVE READING: The beatitudes, page 359 of the *Christian Young People's Hymnal* (or ask two leaguers to read them responsively from Matthew 5:1-11)

SCRIPTURE: James 1:22-27

PRAYER: Use the words of the hymn "Jesus, I have Promised" or "Take My Life and Let It Be."

● To remind us that work possesses dignity, God chose to become not a ruler, law-maker, or high priest—but a carpenter.—*Mary Immaculate*.



# you're not the only one who has TROUBLES

Joe thought life had ended

When rheumatic fever put him on the shelf

by virginia greever plack

## Worship outline

The worship program is made the concluding part of the topic presentation to emphasize the help that comes from reading the Bible and worshipping with fellow Christians. After this presentation the leader can direct the group toward discussion. When time comes for discussion to be ended the leader may conclude the program by having the group read together Psalm 27:1-9 (or all of it, if you are using *Parish School Hymnals* instead of Bibles).

## Suggestions to the leader

The topic is presented in the form of a dialogue between Joe and his adult friend. Ginny and Dick could be omitted or combined. Each participant should have a copy of the whole program and read it over aloud several times to get the feel of it. Each participant needs to really put himself into the actual presentation. Simple rehearsal helps accomplish this.

An example of the problem of some person familiar to the group can be added to the printed program material in a very natural way. It should be brief and to the point: A statement of the person's problem and the Christian solution which the person has found.

Print the Daily Bible Readings list on

simple bookmarks made of colored construction paper. Hand them out at the end of the meeting. (Or call attention to the daily Bible selections printed regularly in *Luther Life*.)

## For group participation

Chose one of the following methods for group participation.

Brief reports on biographies of such people as Booker T. Washington, Dr. Anna Kugler, David Livingstone, Jane Addams, Pandit Nehru, Dr. Jimmy Yen, Florence Nightingale. Write to Women's Missionary Society, Education Division, 1228 Spruce St., Philadelphia 7, Pa., for their pamphlets on missionary pioneers and heroes. The *Eagle* and *Frontier* booklets are excellent reference for this also. Choose several of these biographies for a sort of "Who am I?" or "This is your life" game as a substitute for biography.

Divide into groups of about four people each for "buzz sessions" to agree, discuss, and report back to the whole group on one problem in everyday living they feel to be important.

Have two or three work together in advance on a brief book review of *Better Ways of Growing Up* or some equally good book for young teenagers. Buy the book for circulation within the group.

## Things to do

Build a small group library of the *Eagle* and *Frontier* booklets on George Washington Carver, Sister Emma Francis, Sundar Singh, William Corey, Mary Slessor, David Livingstone, Albert Schweitzer, Florence Nightingale, William Wilberforce, Neesima, Grenfell, etc. These are available at 20c each from the Women's Missionary Society, Education Division, 1228 Spruce St., Philadelphia 7, Pa. Each can be read in approximately one hour.

Contact the local Lutheran welfare society for some project your group can do to help some young person or group of young people with problems in your community. Or else consult your local welfare department.

Secure on consignment from the Lutheran Publication House nearest you a book display of daily Bible reading helps for young people and their families. The display might be "for sale" for a period of several weeks following the program to allow family discussion of the purchase of such books.

## The topic

QUIET MUSIC—223 *PSH*, 220 *PSH* or 224 *PSH* (second tune)

Joe is seated with Dick and Ginny on school house steps. He has his face resting on his cupped hands, deep in thought. As scene opens Dick and Ginny glance at him sympathetically, then continue with low conversation on the outcome of yesterday's ball game. No one pays attention to the ear splitting whistle from off-stage or yells of "It's a touch down!" and "Get him, get him!" Sounds die away and history teacher who is also Luther league advisor enters humming.

MR. WELDON: What's the matter with you three? Why aren't you out there with the kids at the game?

*Ginny and Dick glance at each other, then nod at Joe.*

DICK: It's him, Mr. Weldon. Joe's kind of down at the mouth.

MR. WELDON: Come out of the dream, Joseph, my man. You look as if you'd just been convicted to jail for 10 years.

JOE: I might as well be, sir.

GINNY: *(eager to make things easier for Joe)* His doctor says he can't go out for football or track or anything. Not for all year.

DICK: Maybe longer.

JOE: It's rheumatic fever, Mr. Weldon. I simply can't understand it. I was a little under the weather a while back and now it's turned out to be rheumatic fever. I can't do anything, nothing at all for several weeks and

then limited activity only. Man, sir, I just can't take it.

MR. WELDON: *(dropping down on the steps beside Joe)* Saaaay, Bud, that really is something. *(The four sit in silence for a minute. Then Mr. Weldon pulls out a key chain and begins swinging it round and round his finger. He begins to talk quietly, keeping his eyes fixed on the twirling keys.)* I knew a man once, Joe, who spent 11 years flat on his back. He was my pastor when I was about your age. He'd had T.B. and had come to our church right after that long stretch in the sanatorium.

JOE: *(morosely)* Maybe he was the quiet type.

MR. WELDON: *(chuckling)* Anything but. He could tell the best jokes of anyone I ever knew and he was a star at basketball. He was a great big guy with shoulders like this. *(He shows them.)* He was just finishing seminary when the bug hit him.

GINNY: Goodness, what does a person do all that time?

DICK: You couldn't do it, Ginny, you'd pull your hair out in two weeks flat.

JOE: Hush up, you characters. *(He is interested in spite of himself.)*

MR. WELDON: Well, he read about everything he could get his hands on. He kept on studying—the Bible and theological stuff. He found out he loved music even though I couldn't sing a note. He has one of the finest LP collections I've ever heard. And then there were always people to talk to. He and the other patients used to swap stories and a kind of contest grew between him and a little old Irishman as to who could spin the tallest tales. One day he woke up to the fact that he'd been so busy enjoying things he'd never had time for before that the days were flying past. He was getting better too, and he walked out of that place a much stronger man than the young squirt who was carried in.

JOE: Yeah? But what about now?

MR. WELDON: He's still going stronger than ever. He has to rest a lot but that isn't wasted time with him. And I don't mean he's just stronger physically. It's more than that.

GINNY: *(standing up and pushing her boom*

Virginia Greever Plack is wife of the Rev. Carl R. Plack, consultant on institutional chaplaincy, Division of Welfare, National Lutheran Council. Their home is in Arlington, Va.



under her arm.) You know, Joe, hearing Mr. Weldon made me think of a cousin of my mom's. She's blind but she keeps house like anything and she's even had twin sons.

DICK: What about Helen Keller, Joe? We were just studying her in school. Hey, wait a sec, Ginny. *(He starts after Ginny who is on her way off-stage.)* Let's see what the score is. *(They exit.)*

MR. WELDON: *(after a minute of silence)* Well, Joe, *what* about Helen Keller?

JOE: Aw, we had to read some stuff of hers in English the other day.

MR. WELDON: Why do you suppose we teachers get you kids to read this so-called stuff, Joe. It's not stuff that a little girl who was blind and deaf was helped so marvelously by her family and her teachers that she was able to graduate from college. It's certainly not stuff that she's traveled all over the world and devoted her life to bettering the lot of the blind. You know, Joe, she's 75 now and still going strong.

JOE: *(turns and looks searchingly into Mr. Weldon's eyes)* You're trying to make me feel better, aren't you? *(surprised)*

MR. WELDON: Sure, Joe. You're a good kid and I can't let a knock like this keep you down.

JOE: *(slowly, as if in deep thought)* Keep talking, Mr. Weldon. I think some of what you're saying's beginning to make sense to me.

MR. WELDON: *(leans back on steps)* Well, let's see. You know, Joe, it's not just physical troubles people have. There are all sorts of problems facing all sorts of people. And the truly great people are those who use those problems as stepping stones to greatness and service.

Take Marian Anderson, the singer. She came from poor folk in Philadelphia and her father died when she was 10. She had to help support her family by singing in church concerts. Then the Philadelphia Choral Society and some other groups helped raise money for her musical education. She's a big star now, you know. A while ago she sang a major role in the Metropolitan Opera.

JOE: I heard her on television not so long ago. I'm not much for music but there's something about the way she sings those spirituals that makes me feel like I'm in church.

MR. WELDON: Speaking of music, Joe, how about your band director.

JOE: He has to practically wriggle himself along on those two canes, doesn't he. You know, you've got something there, Mr. Weldon. Polio could have finished Mr. Paul-

son off, but he didn't let it. And somehow he gets across the idea that he thinks life's pretty terrific. Gee, did you know they had 87 tryouts for chorus last week and he only wants 40 to sing in the concert.

MR. WELDON: Have you met his wife? She's a nice looking gal. He's going to sing in our church soon too. Got a swell solo voice. *(He stands up.)* Well, Joe, I've got to get that team on the winning side.

JOE: Thanks for talking to me, Mr. Weldon.

*Mr. Weldon starts to walk away and then turns back to Joe.*

MR. WELDON: You know, Joe, these folks we were talking about—*He stands a moment in silence seeking words to express his thought and feeling.* They had something to fall back on when the going got tough, Joe. They stayed pretty close to God, you know. Their religion, for all of them's more than a Sunday proposition. You know what I mean, don't you Joe? *(He looks intently at the boy.)*

JOE: *(slowly, as though beginning to grasp some of the meaning and purpose behind his own problem)* I think I'm beginning to see, sir. It's got something to do with restoring my soul and leading me, you know, the 23rd Psalm.

MR. WELDON: You're getting it, Joe. Work on it some more. So long, boy. *(Exit.)*

JOE: *(hardly noticing Weldon's departure)* Let's see, how does it go? "He leadeth me beside the still waters, he restoreth my soul . . ."

*Dick and Ginny come quietly back onto the stage and join with Joe in saying remainder of the 23rd Psalm.*

JOE: *(to the audience)* There's so much to it all; I'm just beginning to understand it a little bit. Maybe I'm not beaten at all. Maybe I'm just beginning.

*(He starts humming "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us", PSH 228, and piano takes it up.)*

JOE: Let's sing.

*Actors and audience join in hymn.*

JOE: Here's something I learned about recently. It's singing a prayer. *(He sings "O That the Lord Would Guide My Ways," PSH 232. This could be sung as a solo, duet, or quartet. Or use PSH 240 or 239 or CSB 401 or 408.)*

## Daily Bible readings

Monday—Psalm 1; Tuesday—Psalm 15; Wednesday—Psalm 19; Thursday—Psalm 119: 105—112; Friday—Psalm 130; Saturday—Psalm 46.

# How to Handle Problems

By EARL T. KNAUS, JR.

Do you sit around thinking how different things might be if you do you meet your problem squarely and do something about it?

## Worship outline

HYMN: "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"

VESPERS VERSICLES (from the Vespers service; read responsively)

PSALM 46

GLORIA PATRI (read responsively)

LESSON: Matthew 4:1-11

HYMN: "In the Hour of Trial"

CANTICLE: The Magnificat: (from the Vespers Service; read responsively)

PRAYERS

HYMN: "Onward, Christian Soldiers"

## Suggestions to leader

Ideas for discussion and a quiz are woven into the topic material. Read the topic carefully, then assign portions well in advance of presentation. Be sure to provide pencils and paper, or copies of *High Ideals* containing the quiz, for the group. The topic can lead to lively discussion if the presentation is made with careful preparation. The group should be encouraged to discuss their own problems and the way in which they handle them.

## The topic

Nancy Spears had a problem. She was shy and she felt that people didn't like her very much. She was the tallest girl in her class, and none of the boys ever walked home with her or teased her in that special way they teased the girls they liked. Instead, they stood off and yelled "beanpole" whenever she passed.

"If only," Nancy thought, "if only there were some magic medicine I could take to make me shrink."\*

Nancy was not the only one with a problem. Almost everyone in her class was worried about something. And those young people were no different from people everywhere, anytime. Just about everybody has problems, whether they are six or 60, in Burma or Florida. Naturally there are all kinds of problems, and not everybody has the same number or even the same kind. But if everyone in your Luther League were to make a list of his problems, you would probably find that many of them were almost alike. Start your program by asking everybody to make just such a list and then compare lists to see what difficulties the group has in common.

## What do you do?

The things we do to handle our problems and to find solutions, as well as the problems themselves, are also pretty much alike. After the topic has been introduced, give the following "What are my Ways of Meeting Problems." If there are

\* This story, along with the others found in this article, is taken from the Junior Life Adjustment Booklet *Your Problems: How to Handle Them*, by Hermann H. Remmers and Robert H. Bauer, Inc.





and John Ross of Minneapolis is on his high school football squad, where he plays only on offense. Now 16, John lost his sight at eight. But he is a state champion wrestler, swims, plays golf, and caddies at a country club. His college plans include majoring in journalism.

enough copies of High Ideals for everyone to have a copy of the quiz, or if it is not possible to duplicate copies for everyone, provided paper and pencils for members of the group. Encourage the group to discuss their answers and share their thoughts on the quiz questions.

It should be pointed out when the quiz is introduced that as we mature we set new ways of handling the problems of living. Some of these methods we probably copied from other people and adapted to our own purposes. Other ways

we discovered by accident. We put them into practice because we found them effective methods of gaining what we desired. The quiz will show how many of these common methods of handling problems we use now, and how many we used to apply.

Each question should be read carefully. You can check the ones you can answer YES at present and mark an X at each question you would have answered YES in younger years.

The use of these ways of meeting prob-

lems depends largely on the particular circumstances of the problem. These methods exert a good or bad influence on us according to how we balance them with better ways. Some of them have advantages over others, and some we discard or change as we grow. The group can discuss these matters when they have answered the questions and thought a little about them.\*\*

## What are my ways of meeting problems?

1. Do I examine a personal problem very frankly, objectively, trying to see it clearly for what it really is, then deal with it to the best of my ability?

2. When I am unable to reach a goal I had set for myself, do I set a new goal that I can attain, and then strive to gain it?

3. When I desire something that I secretly feel is not as good as I ought to want, do I try to adorn this "poorer" thing with special values that make it appear more desirable to me?

4. Do I try to defend the things I strive for by assigning "good" reasons for doing them, beyond my own personal reasons?

5. Do I tend to overemphasize a good characteristic to balance out a point that seems poorer to me?

6. Do I daydream over a personal problem—thinking how different things might be, or will be some fair day—rather than meeting the problem squarely and doing something about it now?

7. Do I resort to crying, angry outbursts, or pouting when things go wrong for me?

8. Do I like to think that I face the same difficulties and solve them in the same way that another person I greatly admire has managed these problems?

9. Do I try to forget problems that seem too unpleasant to bear, forcing them out of my conscious thoughts?

10. Do I usually meet a difficult situation by reacting immediately in whatever

way I feel deep inside me about the matter at that moment?

11. When I must decide between two different ways of solving a difficult personal problem, do I carefully think through both ways, then go ahead in the way I feel is best for everyone concerned—without vaguely feeling that I was not doing right?

## Solving problems

One day Paul Lee came to school looking mad as a hornet. "That brother of mine!" blurted Paul. "He got into my room this morning and broke my model airplanes. It's not the first time, either."

"Boy! You do have a problem," commented Frank. "What are you going to do about it?"

Here is a typical problem, maybe very similar to one you have had. What can be done about it? Well, to start with, you have to be sure of what the problem is. Get the facts! Guard against deceiving yourself about what the problem really is. If you can figure out *why* you have the problem, that will go a long way towards determining what is your problem. Once you have actually located the problem you can begin to list possible solutions. Try to think of as many as you can, both good and bad, new and used solutions. As you make this comparison and analyze these in the light of your convictions and how they effect other people. Finally, make a decision and go to work on it. Don't delay your decision, but don't act hastily and without being convinced that you have a solution that you can conscientiously carry through for the good of all concerned.

These three steps can be your guide in problem solving:

1. Get the facts straight, especially the *why's* and *wherefore's*.

The Rev. Earl T. Knaus, Jr., is director of the Lutheran Student Foundation of Western Pennsylvania. His headquarters are in Pittsburgh.

\*\* This quiz is found on page 28 of *Better Ways of Growing Up* by Crawford and Woodward. Chapter two is good background for this topic.



2. List and consider possible ways of handling the situation.
3. Conscientiously decide, and lovingly work it out.

### **What would you do?**

Some studies have been made of the kind of things that bother young people. They show that a great many worry about the same things, want the same things, and get angry about the same things. Those problems that are found to be important to most concern your health, getting along with other people, you and your school, problems about yourself, and you and your home. Suppose we look at examples of these problems and try to determine in each case how to proceed towards solving them.

If you would like to play "private detective," "social caseworker," or "psychoanalyst" each of the following cases can be assigned *at least* a week ahead of time to members of the group for their consideration and study. When the program is presented those assigned a case will report. In this report they can sketch the details, using the three steps for problem solution listed above. They might point out, or even make up, facts that are needed for fuller studies of the case, and give a solution as they see it, with suggestions on how that solution might best be worked out. The whole group could then discuss the case to see if anyone else has suggestions, questions, or comments. Urge members of the group to share their experiences with similar problems and how they found a solution for themselves, and the difficulties and successes they had in working it out.

Let us start with the kind of problem you have with yourself. There was the case of Harold Schultz who got mad too much. For example, one day in school Harold had been trying to draw a figure with a compass. The figure just wouldn't come out right. After several tries, Harold became impatient and angry and threw the paper on the floor along with the compass and a jar of paste. The paste went all over the aisle, and his teacher

had to make him clean it up. When his classmates laughed at him, Harold felt like a baby! He was very embarrassed about the whole thing, and wondered to himself, "What makes me do things like that, anyway? Other people don't seem to get mad as easily as I do." Well, what would you do if you had this problem? Can you think of other examples of personal problems, perhaps your own, and what you can do about it?

If your health is bad that can be a cause of great difficulty. Linda McDade was a person with such a problem. The way she felt one recess time is a good example. At 10 o'clock sharp the girls of her class trooped out to the playground and divided up into two teams for volleyball. But Linda didn't go. In spite of the nice weather she felt tired and chilly. She even had a slight headache. Linda sat down on a bench by herself.

"Aren't you going to play, Linda?" one of the girls called.

"Oh, leave her alone," another said, "Linda never wants to do anything."

Maybe Linda is not taking care of herself by getting the proper rest and food. She may really have good physical health, but is too shy for some reason to join in with her group. But if these are not the case, what would you do in such a situation? If they are the explanations, how would you proceed?

Another common problem young people have is trouble at home. For example, one Sunday Pete Johnson's father was taking his family to the museum. Mike Rayburn, Pete's best friend, went along. Mike had a wonderful time looking at all the exhibits, seeing how steel was made, and going down into the model coal mine. But at home that evening Mike was unusually quiet. When his mother asked him about it, he finally said, "Well, I wish Dad were home more and could spend Sundays with us the way Pete's father does."

Mike's father was a salesman and sometimes he was away from home a week at a time. When Mike's father came home this time the whole family talked about

their problem. Mike learned that his father had to stay at a hotel all by himself when he was away from home. He had to eat alone and missed being with his family. Mike also found out that his mother missed having his father around. Realizing all this didn't solve the problem, but it helped. What would you do in Mike's place? What kind of problems do you have at home and what are you doing about them?

Most people have problems about getting along with others. Part of the reason we have difficulties making friends is because we may not have settled the problems we have already talked about: Problems about ourselves, problems at home, and problems of health.

If we can solve some of our more personal problems it will help us get along with others. Take the cases of Chuck and Cliff. Chuck could always think of funny things to say. But very often his fun was at the expense of some other person. He thought he could say something funny at any time, about anything. But people didn't like a steady diet of Chuck's jokes. They wanted to be serious about serious things, like illness or a difficult school problem. Cliff's problem seems almost opposite to the one Chuck had. Cliff was afraid to start talking to people he didn't know very well. tongue-tied and formal. All Cliff could think of was how stupid everybody must have thought he was. What would you do about the problems of Chuck and Cliff? Do you think their problems are pretty much alike underneath, because they were thinking too much about themselves instead of what other people might be interested in?

Another big problem is getting along in school. Instead of giving a case here to illustrate the problem, consider the following questions. Perhaps a member or two of your group could be assigned

these questions for study and report back to your group for a discussion.

1. Why is it important for you to go to school?
2. Why are you required to take certain subjects, even though you may not like them, or be very good in them?
3. How can you overcome fear and anxiety about tests?
4. What can you do to improve your study habits?
5. What can you do to get along better with your teachers and classmates?

### **"Come unto me . . .**

. . . All ye that labor and are heavy laden," said Christ. He knows our problems and difficulties because he lived on this earth and suffered all things that make life hard for men. Study his temptations and see how he was faced with difficulties and how he had to consider different solutions and finally make his decision and stuck to it. Or ponder the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane where he prayed to be relieved from the terrible burden of crucifixion, but finally accepted it as the thing he must do and carried through with it for all of its terror and hurt.

Because Christ won a victory over the problems of life, not just for himself but for all of mankind, he can invite us to himself and give us help when we need it.

Whatever else we do to handle our problems, and there are many things we can do, the greatest resource of all is our Saviour who links us with the might and power of God. And we can gain help also through Christ's church with its Word and sacraments, its pastors and friends in Christ. To all this we are privileged to turn and know that it is an inexhaustible source for the finding of God's will.

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● A great Latvian Christian said to some of us a short time ago: "Twenty million Communists are taking the world away from 600 million Christians." There are only 20 million really dedicated Communists on the party roles, and there are 600 million enrolled Christians!—*Helen Smith Shoemaker.*



# ***What's Good on a Date?***

By RALPH R. HELLERICH

## **Leaguers help their pastor answer this question**

### **Suggestions to the leader**

The topic as here presented is ready for use. Just add four leaguers and your pastor as adult adviser, stir well, and cook slowly until the boiling point is reached. Then serve. If you do not have a sufficient number of leaguers to give each person a copy, then have someone write or type each of the parts. Assign parts to individuals in your group some time before the topic is to be presented so that they are well enough acquainted with them to be able to read the conversations intelli-

gently. It is not necessary for them to memorize their lines.

### **Suggested program**

HYMN: "From All That Dwell"

PSALM 67

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 6:20-23

PRESENTATION OF TOPIC

DISCUSSION

OFFERING

LORD'S PRAYER.

HYMN: "O Perfect Love"

Younger teenagers can get over their natural shyness through having fun together in groups.



## The topic

MITZI: Why, hello, Pastor! I didn't know you were planning to come down here with the bunch after the Luther League meeting. Come on in!

PASTOR: I hadn't planned to come at first, but I have a problem, and I'd like to have my young people help me with it. Hello, everybody!

GROUP: Hello, Pastor!

HENRY: Boy, that's unusual. You coming to us with a problem. Usually it's the other way around; we're pestering you with something.

PASTOR: Well, they always say that when a person has a problem he should seek the advice of one more experienced than he himself is in that particular field. I have a problem dealing with young people—and you're a good deal younger than I am.

LAURA: Why, Pastor, you're only middle-aged! You're only about 28, aren't you?

PASTOR: Yes, although that is sort of a left-handed compliment. But here's my problem. I've been asked by the Luther League to write a topic, and for me it's a difficult subject. It's to be called, "What's Good on a Date?" The directions say its purpose is "to point out as many desirable activities as possible for two teen-agers enjoying a date with each other." How about it?

LAURA: Oh boy, pastor, I could really give you a list of desirable activities for a date. There's . . .

MITZI: Not that I want to interrupt, Laura, *but* I sort of believe that their idea of desirable activities might be different than yours. Let's not give the pastor a false impression.

HENRY: They certainly gave you a difficult subject this time, Pastor. After all, not everybody has the same likes and dislikes. George likes to hear good classical music, while Laura likes boogie-woogie. Marcia loves to play in outdoor sports, while Paul isn't very good at that sort of thing. Each person has his own likes and dislikes, and we must respect each other's opinion. That makes your

subject difficult—what some people would enjoy on dates, others wouldn't.

PASTOR: It seems, then, that I would have to make clear, in the beginning, the topic, that these are only possible suggestions, and that each would have to pick out those they like.

HENRY: That's it. Quote, To each his own, unquote.

MITZI: Huh, such *silly* boys! But, Pastor, I can see another difficulty. Certain things are acceptable in some communities, and are not acceptable in others. When I say acceptable I mean that most parents and older people have no objection to them. For instance, I know a fellow who lived in Macunshy before he moved to Philadelphia. He said that up there dances were considered "proper" for "Christian" boys and girls. Yet here our parents don't object to dancing. Conditions are different in different sections of the country.

PASTOR: That, then, would also have to be explained in the topic. Suggestions might be included that would be "acceptable" in some sections of the country but not in others. It is always best to follow local community standards, and not fly in the face of tradition. That would be like knocking one's head against a stone wall.

MITZI: If Henry did that, I'd pity the wall. Hah!

HENRY: Such *silly* girls.

GEORGE: I might as well get on the bandwagon, too. I can think of still another problem: Money. If you've already spent your allowance, you can't take your date to the movies. I think the amount of money you have will either swell or cut down the number of things you can do on a date. I suppose the topic will be used by some teen-agers who have little money, and by others who have more.

PASTOR: Yes (if it gets used at all). That, then, is a third limitation: The amount of money which the young man has to spend. I, myself, would like to add one more difficulty that has occurred to me. The possibilities available to various individuals vary according to their ge-



graphical location.

LAURA: That's O. K. in a sermon, Pastor. But in Luther League you have to talk our language. What da'y mean?

PASTOR: I mean that the things that could be done by a dating couple in central Philadelphia would be much different than the activities of a similar couple in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

LAURA: But def! That I can understand. But that really piles up the difficulties, doesn't it?

PASTOR: Yes, it does. I suppose then that four preliminary statements would have to be made, or rather, four warnings given. The suggestions would be at the mercy of individual likes or dislikes, local community standards, financial ability, and geographical area. And now for the suggestions themselves . . .

MITZI: Well, if I know you, Pastor, you didn't come down here totally unprepared to discuss this matter with us. I'll bet you have already planned a central theme, and have laid out boundaries within which we are to make suggestions.

PASTOR: I'm afraid I'll have to move soon. People are getting to know me entirely too well. Yes, I do have a central theme. See what you think of it. I look upon dating as a long-range program. Even from the very first date—no matter with whom—you are working toward the eventual goal of marriage. "Desirable" dating, then, would be dating that helps to prepare you for marriage. Marriage has many facets or angles to it. Therefore, dating should be just as varied. Whether be dating with many different fellows or girls, or whether it be with a "steady", should include as many different things as marriage itself does.

HENRY: Y'know, Pastor, I never thought of that before, but that sounds like a mighty good idea to me. We've always thought of a date as being an evening affair, and usually beginning with movie or dance. "As many different things as marriage itself"—that sounds pretty good to me.

PASTOR: You realize, of course, that there are naturally limitations to such an

idea. You cannot—nor would it be desirable—for you to have as much joy in such activities as a married couple would. You cannot have the strong sense of fellowship which they would feel in working on a common task. Such a feeling comes only after years of strong affection for each other. You and your friend could not experience deeply the spiritual nearness that comes from singing from the same hymnal or saying the prayers together. Such closeness is only a reward for many years of happy married life. But even though you cannot have the same degree of experience as a married couple, you can have the same variety of experiences.

MITZI: I think we understand, Pastor, and it certainly does sound reasonable. Are you ready for suggestions now?

PASTOR: Yes, I believe that takes care of all the preliminaries, so let's go. Let's think of fun together first.

MITZI: Well, there's always the movies or a school dance. And occasional parties—such as Valentine's Day, Hallowe'en, New Year's Eve. . . .

HENRY: And there are bowling parties, or roller skating on an indoor rink. . . .

GEORGE: Or ice-skating—indoors or out, or a sledding date during the winter, or a picnic for two. . . .

LAURA: Or a long hike in the country, or a bicycle ride, or going to a football game. . . .

MITZI: Or a basketball game, or even playing in a softball game during spring and summer, or going swimming or boating together. . . .

PASTOR: Hold it, hold it, let's not go too fast. There's one thing I was glad to see. You are not entirely dependent on commercial amusements for your enjoyment. You mentioned quite a few things there that would cost little or nothing. I believe it is the mistaken idea of many young people that the more money you spend the better time you have.

HENRY: That's true. A lot of kids in school feel that way. But we in Luther League have had more fun on hikes, or playing ball together, than we have had

in going to an expensive movie.

PASTOR: I guess I had better include that in this topic then. Good times on a date are not necessarily bought—they are made. But now what about that other idea I had—dates for work, worship, and so on. Got any ideas on that?

MITZI: You've always told us of the importance of religion in family life, Pastor, so I guess we ought to make an occasional date to bring our friends to church.

PASTOR: Yes, by all means. Of course, it would not be a fun-date. But it would be helpful. You might get a glimmer of the fine feeling that husband and wife get when they are worshipping side by side. Any other suggestions?

GEORGE: Well, I know my mother and father seldom go out to the movies together. But they often sit home together in the evening. How about a quiet date at times—just an evening of talking together, or playing cards or some other game, or listening to the radio. . . .

PASTOR: That's it, George. That's what I meant. Those things give you a better conception of actual married life. As I can see it, there are two real dangers in having *only* fun-dates, especially those that depend on commercial amusements. First, you may soon become bored, and seek to satisfy your desire for excitement and novelty by reckless driving, or drinking to excess, or heavy smooching. Secondly, you get a false start for a lifelong companionship. You only know what it means to be all polished up and go out for fun. There are long periods of living in between such "dates" after you are married. And if you expect to have a

successful marriage it is best to learn how to share those "living" periods. Try a work date, where you would work side by side; or an in-law date, which you spend some time in the company of your friend's family; or a rainy-Sunday afternoon date. If you can learn to get along on such a date, you're a good prospect for a happy marriage.

HENRY: Y'know, Pastor, you've taught us a lot about dates tonight too. With a set-up like that you should be able to hammer together a topic.

PASTOR: Well, I think I have almost enough material now. There's just one more question I have to ask you. If any local league wanted to talk about this stuff after they finished the topic, what sort of subjects would you discuss?

HENRY: You could discuss those four limitations we were talking about at first. The leaguers could speak about those that affect their own group.

LAURA: Or they could check over our suggestions for fun-dates, and see which ones they could use.

MITZI: Then they could talk over your general idea, Pastor, of dates as a training school for marriage.

GEORGE: And they might be able to think of other ideas to fit-in with your scheme—other dates that would help prepare them for an all-round good marriage.

PASTOR: Well, thank you very much. I always enjoy getting other people to do my work for me. Now all I must do is go home and write up the topic and make it in to the Luther League of America. Say, how about some songs around the piano before I go.

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● Joe Medwick, the former outfielder of the St. Louis Cardinals, toured Europe with a group of entertainers. When the troupe reached Rome, they were granted an audience with Pope Pius. His holiness graciously inquired of each in turn the nature of his business.

"I'm a comedian," said one man.

"I'm a dancer," said a young girl.

Then came Medwick's turn. With simple dignity, he said, "Your holiness, I'm a Cardinal."—*American Weekly*.





**"Man  
Needs  
Only  
Jesus  
Christ!"**

## God Reached Down

By J. David Mumford

### A topic for Reformation Sunday

#### To the leader

You have a great opportunity here in leading the Reformation topic. You can help all our group gain a better appreciation of the work of Martin Luther. And in so enriching their loyalty for the church it is possible for you to make a real contribution to their Christian experience. So you see it is most important for you to do your best in this topic presentation. You are the key person. It depends on you.

Read over the material a number of times. Get it fixed in your mind. Be able to phrase the whole thing in your own words. That way it will come alive for you and you will be able to put it across for your league.

Another thing, please get your assistants lined up ahead of time. For example, if you have someone who will take the devotions, go over the worship section with him carefully. Don't wait until 10 minutes before

league begins and then scurry about in a frantic rush. Such an approach to worship is always foolish and sometimes it can be blasphemous. And, along the same line of preparation, if you think it wise to have another leaguer present some of the ideas in the projects which are suggested, get in touch with him ahead of time. Go over the ideas. They are only suggestions, some you will like, others will be no good at all. You and your helper should sift the good from the bad. Present the ideas you like. Don't waste time going over the whole list because that would mean a lot of fruitless discussion. You are the leader—well, lead.

At various places in the material you will notice questions for discussion. We've put them there to nail down a certain point and to insure more concentrated attention. We think they can help you. So look them over carefully. Make sure you understand the

point. Then you can go ahead.

Yes, sir, leading a topic for Luther League can be an exciting adventure in faith. And it will be that for you if you remember to do your very best for God. As you do that he will send you the thrill of new service and richer faith in your own experience.

Martin Luther is one of the greatest figures in history. There is a drama and spirit of adventure about Luther that tingles down your spine and warms your heart. Perhaps your league has had opportunity to see the recent motion picture story of Luther, *Here I Stand*. It may be that your pastor has the film strip edition of the story. If you have seen either the motion picture or film strip you have sensed the thrilling power of God's grace reaching down and touching Martin Luther.

### Projects

Right here we come to those projects which your league might be interested in attempting. Why not put on a pageant about the Reformation? This can be a lot of fun and you'll learn a whole lot if you go into it. You won't need too many characters either, and surely your pastor will help with books from his library, and your advisors can help you practice.

Or, if you don't fancy the pageant idea why not take your puppets again and dramatize an incident in the life of Luther. Take his appearance at the Diet of Worms. Every life of Luther will give you background material for costumes as well as what was said and done. So consider this as a project. If you get really good at it there are other organizations in the congregation and community who'd be happy to have you put on your show.

Still a third project your league might consider is the idea of a window display centering on the results of the Reformation. Some of the most wonderful things in our way of life came directly out of the work of Luther and the Reformers. Your display might, therefore, show Luther nailing the 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. Behind and above Luther and the church would be the cross, the symbol of our Saviour, the focal point of our church. Running from the figure of Luther could be ribbons to the public schools, the libraries, the laboratories, the polling places, the homes, the shops and factories. It is, you see, from evangelical Christianity and its emphasis on salvation through the gift of God's grace in Jesus Christ that we have the doctrine of the priesthood of believers. Thus the cross, the Bible, and the Lutheran church have their tremendous



parts to play in the dignity and freedom of every individual person.

All of these projects are for the glory of God's kingdom, so be sure that here too you do your best as Luther leaguers for our Lord.

A final section, "The Measure of the Man," is included. This, we hope, may lead to further investigation in the life and work of Luther that all shall have a better appreciation of the Reformation.

### The topic

On November 10, 1483, just about nine years before Christopher Columbus discovered America, Martin Luther was born in the little German town of Eisleben. His father, Hans, and his mother, Margareta, were devout and pious Chris-



ans, so the next day, St. Ann's day, Martin was baptized in the parish church and given St. Ann as his patron. While Hans Luther was poor, he was honest and intelligent, a person of some importance in the community. Thus, when it was evident that little Martin had a good mind and a real interest in learning he was sent off to school.

His first schooling was at Magdeburg and then in Eisenach, cities in the territory not too distant from Eisleben. His father decided that Martin should study for the law and win for himself a great career and ample means to take care of them in their old age. Martin's education cost his parents a great deal in sacrifice and effort, so it was a terrible blow when Luther forsook it all and entered the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt.

Martin had entered the University at Erfurt after finishing school in Eisenach and he had already received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees when he became a monk. Luther was very sensitive to the anger of his parents, but he felt that he had to enter the monastery to fulfill a vow in a moment of personal crisis.

Since he was a brilliant person Luther had always been aware of his need for God. Early in the spring of 1505 a close friend of his at Erfurt had been taken ill and died. Luther had spent hours considering the meaning and purpose of life and this incident had made him wonder more. Then on July 2 in the same year, while he was returning to the university from a visit, he had been caught in a terrific thunderstorm. Fearing for his very life Luther had vowed to St. Ann that she managed to have him spared he would become a monk. The storm had ended. Luther had returned to Erfurt and, though he knew he was disobeying his

father's wishes, he had prepared to enter the Augustinian monastery.

### Questions for discussion

1. How would you feel about a vow you had made in a situation like Luther's? What about death-bed promises extracted for a selfish purpose?

2. Do you agree with Hans Luther that Martin was wasting his life in forsaking his work as a law student to become a monk?

3. Why would anyone think it possible to be a better Christian as a monk than as a Christian lawyer?

### Luther's monastic life

Luther did everything to the best of his ability. He worked hard on his studies. He practiced faithfully in his music. Now that he was a monk he did his very best to become the best monk he could. So the records show that Brother Martin tried every possible way to find the well-advertised peace that was supposed to come to everyone who submitted to monastic life. He starved himself until he fainted. He beat himself until he bled. He did all the mean, dirty work he could find. This he had been told would give him humility and peace and confidence. But it didn't. It just wouldn't work for Brother Martin. And in time he noticed it wasn't working so well for some of the others either.

Luther had entered the monastery on July 17, 1505. On May 2, 1507 he was ordained and said his first mass as a Roman Catholic priest. His father came for the festivities connected with the ordination. While he had learned to accept Martin's decision and respect his ordination as Father Martin, Hans could not refrain from reminding his son that the Fourth Commandment should have some meaning even for a priest.

### Questions for discussion

1. What is the Fourth Commandment? Say it.

2. Do you think Hans was wise in bringing up the old wound?

The Rev. J. David Mumford is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Wadsworth, Ohio.

3. Why couldn't Luther find peace in all he did?

4. How can we ever earn our salvation?

### **The trip to Rome**

The fact that Luther had a brilliant mind had been evident all along. Now that he was Father Martin of the Augustinian order his superiors sent him to be a professor in the University of Wittenberg. After he had taught one semester he returned to Erfurt for further work on his degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology. As he was working in the library he began to actually study the Bible instead of only the textbooks of the Roman church. Thus he came across the statement of St. Paul in Romans 1:17—"The just shall live by faith". That truth lodged in Luther's mind and heart and began to bring the whole message of the gospel into focus through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

His studies were interrupted by his selection to go to Rome as representative of the Augustinian monasteries in the area. Together with a companion Luther walked from Erfurt to Rome. The trip was supposed to be a delight. And so it was when they started out. But Luther was hurt and disgusted and puzzled by the careless irreverence of the Italian churchmen, and their greed for power and money. Yet as a loyal son of the Roman church he considered these things to be of only temporary significance.

He returned to Erfurt determined to continue as an Augustinian priest in the Roman Catholic church. After he had come back to Erfurt he was transferred to Wittenberg, granted his Doctor's degree, and assigned to a full and active life. He was to lecture for the University and also to preach in the Castle Church at Wittenberg. Surely Doctor Martin would not suffer from boredom or from the want of something to do.

Doctor Martin was good. The students came to hear him lecture. They thronged around to ask him questions. They loved his ready wit and good humor. And in

the congregation of his church the people grew to love and admire and trust this man who never, ever lost touch with ordinary people.

For about five years Doctor Martin's life was full and rich. But then a cloud appeared. The cloud blew up in Rome and as it came across Europe to Germany it got bigger and bigger.

Pope Leo X was in the Vatican. He was interested in rebuilding St. Peter's Church and he needed money badly. Someone in his court decided that as the head of the church, the vicar of Christ, he, as pope, had the power and authority to gain the funds he needed for St. Peter's by having indulgences peddled to the people.

An indulgence was a pardon from punishment for sin. In theory there were certain conditions of repentance that must be met before the pardon is complete. But in common practice those conditions were forgotten.

The star salesman for the indulgences was a Dominican monk named Tetzel. He used one of the first singing commercials in selling the indulgence to the German people. His rhyme went like this:

"As soon as the coin in the coffer rings,  
The soul from purgatory springs"

Such foolishness was not allowed inside Wittenberg. The Duke, Frederick the Wise, would not permit it. But Tetzel came close to Wittenberg and the Wittenbergers flocked out to purchase forgiveness for their sins and the release of loved ones from the fires of purgatory.

### **Questions for discussion**

1. Why do you like some teachers better than others?
2. What is a good sermon?
3. Can we ever buy the forgiveness of sins?
4. Get your pastor to explain purgatory to you.

### **The 95 theses**

It was this commerce in the sacred things of God's love and grace that



brought Luther to the threshold of the Reformation. God reached down and touched his conscience so that he could not keep quiet. He had to speak. And so on October 31, 1517 on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg Doctor Martin Luther fixed his famous 95 Theses. These theses were points where Doctor Luther disagreed with the sale of indulgences. He was willing to debate the truth of the issue with any who would appear.

Luther had not wanted to leave the Roman church. He sought only to clean out the evils that he—and everyone else—new existed. Even Roman Catholic historians writing of that era admit that the church had grown corrupt with too much power and not enough responsibility.

The pope and his supporters cared little enough for the truth of all that Luther and his supporters claimed. They were interested only in two things. First, to put Luther down—and they didn't care how this was done; and, second, to hush the whole thing up so they could keep their power. They tried threats and bribes and everything else at their command. Yet once Luther had taken the first step he would not retreat. It was as if a prison door had been thrown open and the prisoners were daring to take their first steps into freedom. They would not return. They could not go back. They felt the presence of God, and in his power and truth they dared all the power of the Roman Catholic world.

The truth of evangelical Christianity—we are saved by the grace of God as we accept Christ Jesus as Lord and Saviour—swept like wildfire over Europe.

God reached down to his church in the work of Martin Luther and brought his church back into his kingdom. Thus it was that on April 18, 1521 Luther dared face the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles V, and the representatives of the pope, and in the crowded hall of the Diet of Worms speak those words that will live forever in the life

of the Christian church.

"Unless I am convinced by scripture and plain reason—I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other—my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen."

And so it was. Down to the end of his busy, devout, devoted life on February 18, 1546 Luther stood on the Word of God revealed to men in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, the Head of the living church.

### **The measure of the man**

Pastor Martin Luther's measure must be taken in so many different areas. He was the prophet of the people. He made the home and family basic units in Christian society. Luther's sermons were the inspiration of his congregations. His passion for music found a responsive chord in the people's love of beauty. His work in translating the Bible, in the reformation of the liturgy, in the publication of the catechism, profoundly influenced the whole of Christendom. The freedom for independent investigation and the rights of the individual led to modern learning, the public schools, and a democratic society. Yet most of all Luther freed the souls of men from the fear and trembling of a tyrannical ecclesiastical system so that they could know the free love of God and stand fast in the grace of Christ.

### **Worship service**

PRELUDE

HYMN: "Beautiful Saviour"

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Psalm 46; John 8:31-36

PRAYER: Sentence prayers

HYMN: "The Church's One Foundation"

OFFERING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRESENTATION OF TOPIC

APOSTLES CREED

HYMN: "A Mighty Fortress"

BENEDICTION AND FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE

● If we spend our lives building walls rather than bridges, than we have no right to complain if we are lonely.—*Life Today*.

# signs of the times

by ben f. sheetz

## what's special about a diamond, or a flag, or a cross?

### To the leader

At least a week before your meeting you should announce the topic. Ask league members to examine your church building, the stained-glass windows, woodwork, for every example of picture-language they can find. You might ask every member to give a secret sign before being admitted to the meeting room that evening. A secret sign to use is discussed later in this topic.

You will find these things helpful in presenting the topic: (1) a large blackboard or several small ones; (2) someone who is fairly good at drawing; (3) blackboard crayons in these colors: white, red, green, violet. If you cannot find suitable crayons in these colors,

use white chalk for the drawings and paper or cloth of the needed colors.

Some time before your meeting have your "artist" draw a large circle (See page 25) representing the church year. Show the position of the earth about the sun with its position at each of the four seasons. Using the colors for each season of the church calendar, mark off this church calendar, beginning with Advent. Select a "theme song" and a scripture reading for each period—Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, etc. You will find such hymns grouped together in both *Parish School Hymnal* and *Common Service Book*. A hymn and scripture reading, suitable for most of the seasons are suggested in this discussion.

## what is a symbol?

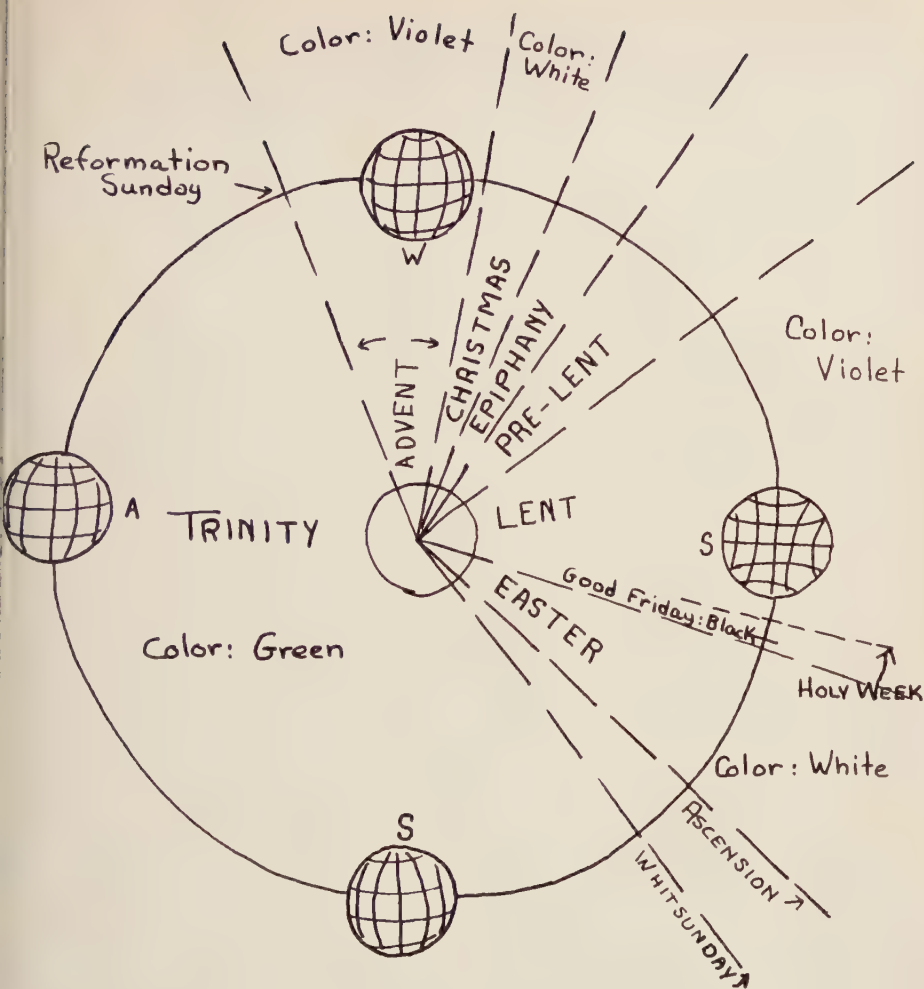
Have you ever stood at attention while the flag was being raised, or on a street corner as the flag went by, with hands playing? Really now, didn't you feel just a bit goose-pimply? No, you aren't a queer. Real gone people have feelings like that, sometimes. Maybe they're too busy to think about them most of the time.

Hope to wear a gold football some day? A class ring or pin? A diamond maybe, if you're a girl? Does your high school football team give with everything it has in that Thanksgiving Day game, just to take home some object like a silver cup or an old iron kettle? Why should they work so hard?

Beautiful as our flag is, isn't it just a piece of cloth? The gold football, the class ring or pin, and the silver cup aren't things you can actually use. Why then do they have special meaning for us? Because they are *symbols*.

What is a symbol? The dictionary says that a symbol is something that stands for something else. The flag stands for our country. We love it because we love our country. This topic will discuss those objects and signs which are symbols in connection with the church. Let us call it the picture language of the church. We will go through the church year, then, beginning with Advent, and use as much of this picture language as we can.





## The church year

Your aim will be to take a quick trip through the church year, using hymns, scripture readings, and symbols to mark each season. In order to cover the six major seasons discussed here in the topic, budget your time. You will not be able to spend too much time on anyone.

If you like a splash of something exciting, futuristic, and out-of-this-world, how about a space-time machine to project your league through our universe and the church year in an hour or so allowed for your meeting? All the equipment you will need: A good imagination, a few chords on the piano, or some other sound effects. To add a dramatic touch

that will indicate the passing of time between seasons you might dim the lights while your pianist plays one stanza of the theme song you have chosen for the season you are entering. With lights on again, have your members sing as much of the hymn as time will allow.

## Church seasons

*Advent.* "Another Year is Dawning" (PSH 160) is a New Year's hymn. You could use it here to emphasize the fact that the church year begins with the first Sunday in Advent. Or you can use some well-known Advent hymn, like "Rejoice All Ye Believers."

What do we think about at this time? We are looking forward to the coming of Jesus

(Christmas). It is the season during which we prepare for this great event. Color: Violet, the same as for Lent. Violet reminds us to repent, to be sorry for our sins with a determination to improve, so that we may be ready when Christ comes.

What symbols may we use in connection with this season? Have your members turn to Page 27, then call for suggestions. Be sure to ask why they suggest a particular symbol. The connection they see is more important than the choice. If the person whom you have selected for the sketching can work fast enough, have him draw the symbols as they are suggested, into the Advent segment of your church year circle. If not, simply point them out. A suggested short scripture reading for Advent: Isaiah 55:12, 13.

(You may follow the same procedure for each of the succeeding seasons.)

*Christmas.* You might explain that in the church year the celebration of Christmas begins with Christmas Day and extends to Epiphany. Christmas carols belong here, of course. Choose any one your leaguers like real well. The color is white, standing for innocence, purity, light, joy, peace. Symbols? You should have no difficulty finding a suitable picture-language for this period. Besides the ones shown on Page—there are others. The rose—represents our Lord and the nativity. Scripture: Luke 2:8-12, 16, 17.

## Epiphany

Epiphany begins January 6 and the season continues from one to six weeks, depending upon the date on which Easter falls. You might call the attention of your group to this fact. The remainder of the church year is governed by the date on which Easter falls. The theme for this period is the manifestation (showing forth) of our Lord. Color: white. The story of the Wise Men belongs here. One obvious symbol: The star. What others can you think of? How about "As with Gladness Men of Old" (PSH 23, CSB 38) for a theme song? Scripture: Matt. 2:1,2.

*Pre-Lenten Season.* We have referred to only six seasons, not including this one. It is here that we find those three Sundays with the hard-to-pronounce names: Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima—seventy, sixty, and fifty days before Easter. They are only approximately seventy, sixty, and fifty days before Easter, of course, but that's where their names came from. Color: Green.

*Lent.* This season will be more or less familiar to most of your group. Color: Violet. Theme: Repentance. Select a "theme song"

from those listed under Lent in *Parish School Hymnal* or *Common Service Book*. A suggested scripture reading: Psalms 130. You will find many suitable symbols, particularly for Holy Week and Good Friday. The color for Good Friday is black, the only time that black is ever used. Symbols: The Cross, crown of thorns, the three nails, INRI, the chalice (which does not appear in the chart but which is probably on one of your church windows). The chalice reminds us of the Last Supper, of course.

*Easter.* Have someone explain what determines the date on which Easter falls. You have many familiar "theme-song" hymns to choose from. Matt. 28: 1-6 will be an appropriate scripture reading. See the accompanying chart for symbols. You might ask your pastor to suggest others. The color: White. The theme is obvious, and the season lasts for 40 days, until Ascension.

*Trinity.* This season continues for almost half of the calendar year, and sometimes a week longer than half the year. Since it is such an important season you may want to spend more time on it than you do on some of the others. It begins on the Sunday following Whitsunday, or Pentecost. "Crown Him with Many Crowns," (PSH 59, CSB 134) "Come Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove," (PSH 65, CSB 150) are Trinity season hymns. If you use either of them, and have time to examine the words and note how many of them suggest church symbols. The color is green, which stands for Christian growth. Which of the symbols do you think express this idea of growing as a Christian? Scripture reading: II Peter 3:18.

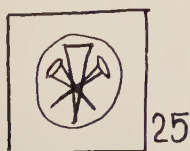
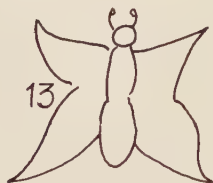
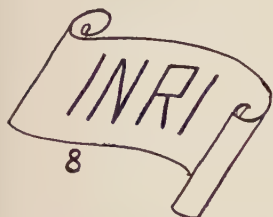
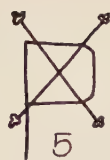
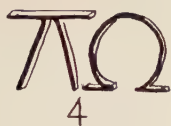
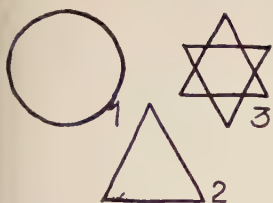
*Special Days.* There are a great many days commemorating special events, such as the Transfiguration, the Ascension, Pentecost, the Reformation. Besides, there is a day for each of the apostles and several other important New Testament heroes. The color for most of these days is red, which symbolizes fire, blood, martyrdom. (Transfiguration and Ascension: White)

## Other suggestions

How about turning your space-time machine back to the first century to start your meeting off? You and your fellow Christians are in danger for your lives. To protect yourselves you will admit to your meeting room only those who can give the secret sign. The first (see No. 6 in the list of symbols) was used as a secret sign by early Christians. If you decide to do this, announce it in time so that your members can be prepared.



# SYMBOLS



Ben F. Sheetz is a Lutheran layman from Bellefonte, Pa. He is a printer and semi-professional writer.

How about using symbols, drawn on the blackboard, to show your order of worship? The *lyre* or *harp* could announce your hymns; the *lamp* the scripture reading; the *eagle* or *torch* the topic discussion, and the smoking *censer* the prayer.

## Symbols

1. Because it has no end, the circle represents Eternity.
2. With its three sides the Triangle stands for the Holy Trinity.
3. Interlaced triangles have the same meaning.
4. These two Greek letters are the first and last of the Greek alphabet (the beginning and the end). Jesus is the beginning and the end of life.
5. Two more Greek letters—X and P interlaced. They are the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ, and so they stand for the name of Christ.
6. The fish is a very old symbol for "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour." It was used as a secret sign by early Christians in the days of persecution.
7. IHC—first three letters of the Greek word for Jesus, and so it is really an abbreviation, standing for his name.
8. INRI—Initials of the Latin words Pilate placed on the cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

9. There are different forms of the Lamb symbol, but it always represents Jesus as the Lamb of God.

10. The hand extended from heaven, symbolizes the blessing and care of God.

11. The open book—the Bible.

12. Candle—Jesus, the light of the world.

13. Butterfly—resurrection.

14. Anchor—Christian hope.

15. Ship—the church.

16. Keys—spiritual authority of the church. It also stands for St. Peter.

17. Lamp—the Word of God.

18. Harp, or lyre—Christian music.

19. Censer—smoke rising indicates prayers rising to God.

20. Eagle—the gospel.

21. Dove—the Holy Spirit.

22. Cross—the most commonly used Christian symbol. Reminds us of the crucifixion.

23. Cross on which St. Andrew was supposed to have been crucified, known as his cross.

24. The torch represents the gospel, enlightenment.

25. Three nails, such as could have been used on the cross, stand for the sufferings of Jesus on the cross.

26. The crown of thorns also represents the passion of our Lord.

There are many other symbols. If you find this subject interesting, ask your pastor to tell you where you can find out more about them.

How about inventing a few symbols of your own? These signs were all pictures of objects familiar to people centuries ago. For instance, what might an electric light bulb stand for? (It glows only as long as it is connected to the power source. A Christian glows only as long as he is connected to his Power Source.) Go on from there, if you like to let your imagination run.

● An artist and his family moved into a neighborhood. They employed a neighbor girl to help with the housework. One evening they sat on the porch watching the glorious sunset. The girl asked permission to return home for a few minutes and show her family the sunset.

"There is no need to go," smiled the artist. "They can see it from your home."

"No, they can't," insisted the girl. "I never saw sunsets until you came and they won't see it unless I go and show it to them."—*Celis Luce.*

● I want my son to have a college education, but I cannot give it to him unless he asks for it and wants it. If I make available for him the money he needs, he must cooperate by opening his mind through study in order to receive the education. The reason we do not receive answers to our prayers may be in us—in our failure to cooperate.—*Charles L. Allen.*



# The Lutheran Church Is Divided

by Paul O. Hamsher

But the seven million members in the U. S. and Canada are learning to work together

## Job for the leader

Better clear your decks for action, program leader. You are going to be in charge of planning a convention. Date? The day you give this program. Where? Your church. Who's coming? Lutherans from the United States and Canada. Cost? An offering. Meals? Whatever you decide.

You are going to invite guests to your Lutheran League to help your group learn about the different branches of the Lutheran Church in North America. The "guests," of course, will be the leaguers whom you select to take part in the program.

If yours is a large league, ask 18 leaguers IN ADVANCE OF YOUR CONVENTION to be delegates. Each will represent a different Lutheran body. Be sure to give the participants the facts and history about the group they are representing. They will want to know these things so well that they can *talk* about their Lutheran church—and not *read* about it to the league.

If yours is a smaller league, you can double up on the parts. Let one leaguer represent two or three different churches—as the case may be.

Of course, you will want your meeting room to resemble a convention hall. Since you will preside at the meeting, latch onto a speaker's table. Better yet, find a speaker's stand. Hunt up a gavel to use when you call the meeting to order.

Arrange the chairs in rows: Delegates on one side, visitors on the other. Hang a "welcome" banner at the entrance to your meeting room. To lend atmosphere, print the sign

in English—and in some of the other languages that could be spoken at your convention: Danish, German, Norwegian, Finnish, Swedish, Slovakian.

Have name tags, if you like.

Prepare a large cardboard sign, or a banner, fastened to a pole for each of the 18 churches represented. On each banner print the initials of a different church body. Underneath in smaller letters print the membership of that body. Here are the initials of the church bodies and their present baptized membership:

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. ULCA—2,143,372   | 10. AELC—21,106 |
| 2. LC-MS—1,916,510  | 11. SC—20,808   |
| 3. ELC—919,840      | 12. FALC—16,293 |
| 4. ALC—824,535      | 13. NS—11,027   |
| 5. Aug. ELC—499,640 | 14. NELC—8,684  |
| 6. JSW—322,947      | 15. NLM—8,109   |
| 7. LFC—65,904       | 16. LB—3,929    |
| 8. UELC—53,929      | 17. ES—1,550    |
| 9. FSS—30,833       | 18. ILC—1,465   |

## Convention schedule

Open your program by explaining what the meeting is about. The first two paragraphs of the topic will guide you in framing your introduction.

Now use a part of the worship service: Hymn, psalm, Gloria Patri, and hymn.

## Topic Target

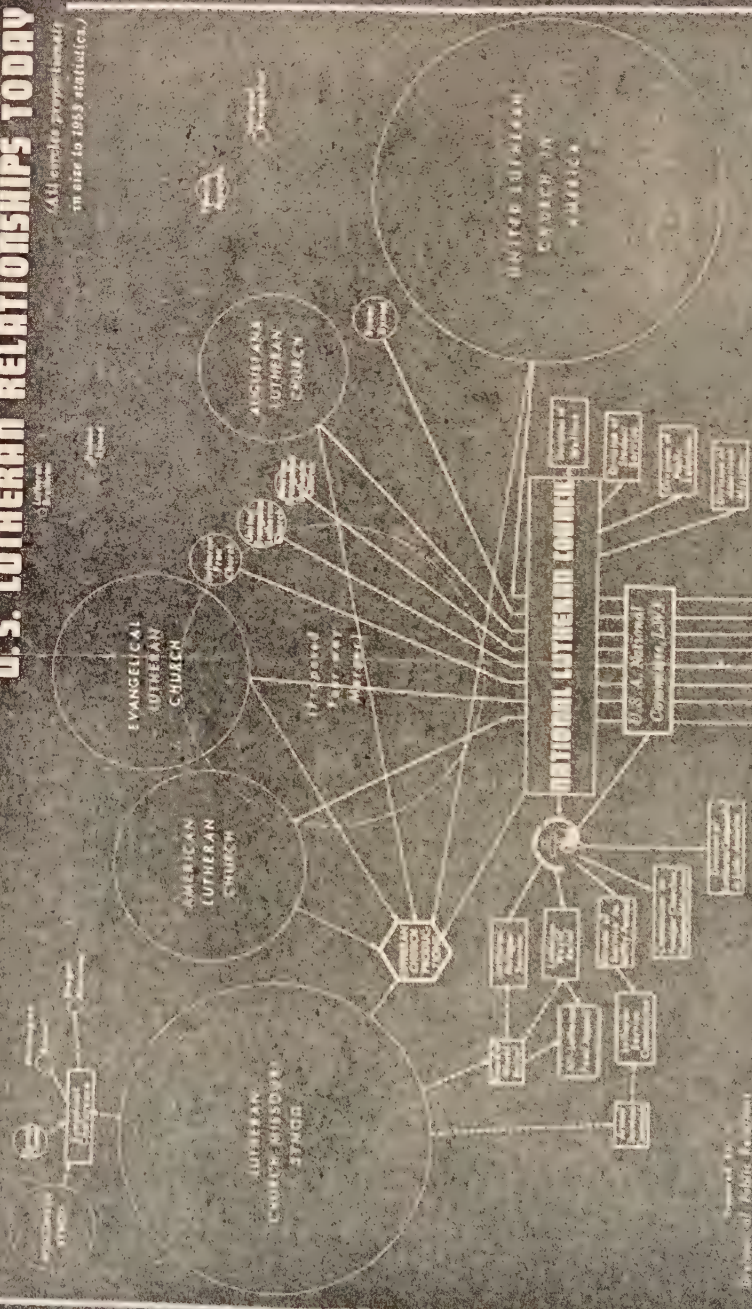
To learn about the branches of the Lutheran church in North America.

To understand some of the reasons why the Lutheran church is divided.

To see some of the ways we are gradually uniting.

# U. S. LUTHERAN RELATIONSHIPS TODAY

(All circles proportional in size to 1953 statistics.)



**LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION**  
1st Member Churches: 40 Countries

Division of Public Relations  
**NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL**  
35 Madison Avenue  
New York 17, N.Y.

1954-1955



This is the time formally to call the convention to order. Greet the delegates. Then announce roll call. Ask each representative to state his name and the church he represents.

Reports are next. Here each representative tells something about the church body to which he belongs. You will find this material on the topic. As each person completes his report, he places his banner in one of three groups.

Open the convention floor to "debate" by asking the questions at the end of the topic. Your group could have loads of fun by framing some of the discussion questions as motions—then letting the leaguers discuss them.

For instance, you could plant these motions in the audience, "I move that the United Lutheran Church in America unite with the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church." Or, "I move that our Luther League help the cause of union of the Lutheran bodies in the United States and Canada." Of course, you would decide on ways your group could do this.

Following discussion ask for a motion to adjourn. Then have the closing worship service: Scripture, prayer, and a third hymn.

## Worship

HYMN: "Praise Ye the Father" 255 PSB

PSALM: 122, p. 45 PSB

GLORIA PATRI

HYMN: "Faith of Our Fathers" 139 PSB

SCRIPTURE: John 17:11-23

OFFERING

PRAYER: 50 p. 31 PSB

HYMN: "The Church's One Foundation" 135 PSB

BENEDICTION.

## The topic

The title for this topic may sound a bit as though we wanted to run down our church. People like to think in terms of working together, cooperating, and uniting for a cause. Actually, we could have chosen for our topic, "The Lutheran Church Is United," and spent a whole period studying the ways in which our seven million Lutherans in the United States and Canada work together.

Purpose of this topic, however, is to learn something about the branches of the Lutheran church in North America, to understand some of the reasons why we are divided, and then to see how we are gradually uniting.

## Reports from the churches

1. ULCA. "I represent the United Lutheran Church in America. We number, as you can see, more than 2 million baptized members. We organized in 1918 by merging three bodies of Lutherans. These were the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South.

We are one of the eight Lutheran bodies in America cooperating in the National Lutheran Council. And we are a member of the Lutheran World Federation." (*Place banner against wall at center.*)

2. LC-MS. "I am only a visitor here. I cannot be an official representative because the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod does not join with most of you Lutherans in activities like this. In doctrine and teaching we do not agree with many of you. We are joined with four other church bodies in what is called the "Synodical Conference." We limit our cooperation with other Lutherans to a very few activities in which we do believe a united front is necessary. For example, we participated in the All-Lutheran Food Appeal for overseas needy, in Lutheran Refugee Service, and in financing the film *Martin Luther*, which has been so highly praised through the world.

As you can see, our membership is a little less than that of the ULCA.

We accept all the canonical books of the Bible without reservation, and have closed communion. Our church members cannot belong to secret organizations, like the Masons, the Rainbow Girls, or Eastern Star. We run many parochial schools. You have probably heard "The Lutheran Hour" on radio, or perhaps have seen the program "This Is the Life" on TV. These are presented by our Lutheran body. (*Place banner against wall at far right.*)

3. ELC. "I am the official delegate from the Evangelical Lutheran Church. We are of Norwegian background. We organized in 1917.

In 1930 we joined in a federation with four other Lutheran bodies to form the

American Lutheran Conference. We also belong to the National Lutheran Council.

Right now we are working with three other Lutheran bodies for a merger. These are the ALC, LFC, and UELC. If this merger goes through, the American Lutheran Conference will no longer exist. It will boast a membership almost as large as the ULCA. We would number more than 1,800,000 members." (*Place banner against wall with ULCA.*)

4. ALC. "I represent the American Lutheran Church which organized in 1930 by the union of the Joint Synod of Ohio, the Iowa Synod, and the Buffalo Synod. We are of German background. I, too, represent a church that cooperates in the National Lutheran Council and is also a member of the American Lutheran Conference." (*Place banner with the National Lutheran Council churches at center.*)

5. Augustana. "I represent the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, organized in 1860. We also belonged to the American Lutheran Conference. In 1952, however, we withdrew from the discussions looking toward union. We felt that such discussions should be open to all Lutheran churches.

Now we are at a crossroad. We have two union proposals to consider: To return to the discussions with the four other American Lutheran Conference churches, or to unite with the ULCA, which just made that proposal in April this year.

We could, of course, remain independent and unite with no one. But that is not likely. We are heartily in favor of Lutheran churches uniting." (*Place banner at center.*)

6. JSW. "Like the gentleman from the Missouri Synod, I, too, am only a visitor here. I am from the Joint Synod of Wisconsin. Our church was organized in 1892 by the merger of three synods in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. With the Missouri Synod and the three other groups, we belong to the Synodical Conference, which has a total membership of about one-third of the Lutherans

in North America. Recently we threatened to withdraw from this conference because there seemed to be some approval of Lutheran churches' sponsoring Boy Scout troops. That we could not permit." (*Place banner at far right with Missouri.*)

7. LFC. "I represent the Lutheran Free Church, organized in 1897. Like the ELC, most of our members came from Norway. And, like them, we are members of both the National Lutheran Council and the American Lutheran Conference.

We hope to merge with the others of that conference as mentioned by the delegate from the ELC." (*Banner at center.*)

8. UELC. "I am from the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. Our people are mostly of Danish descent. We organized in 1896. As you can see, we have only a little more than 50 thousand members. We, too, belong to both the National Lutheran Council and the American Lutheran Conference. And we hope to enter the merger described by the ELC delegate." (*Place banner at center.*)

9. FSS. "I am the delegate from the Finnish Suomi Synod. As our name indicates, most of our members came from Finland. We organized in 1900. We belong to the National Lutheran Council, and do our share of world-wide work through that organization.

We will not likely merge with other Lutherans very soon, because of our nationalistic background." (*Place banner at center with NLC churches.*)

10. AELC. "I represent the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, organized in 1872 as the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church. We changed our name just recently, hoping to grow more effective in American life.

We belong to the National Lutheran Council. We may someday become a

The Rev. Paul O. Hamsher is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, St. Albans, W. Va.

ynod of the United Lutheran Church." *(Place banner at center.)*

11. SC. "I am a visitor from the Slovak Church. Like the two other visitors who have spoken to you, I represent a church of the Synodical Conference. Most of our members are Slovakian. We were organized at Connellsville, Pennsylvania, in 1902.

Our pastors and teachers are educated in the colleges and seminaries of the Missouri Synod.

Please do not confuse us with the Slovak Zion Synod which belongs to the ULCA." *(Place banner to right with Missouri.)*

12. FALC. "I represent the Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church. We do not belong to any federation of churches. We came from Finland.

In America, we began on an absolutely congregational basis as early as 1872. In 1929 we organized into two districts, 20 ministers and 21 congregations being enrolled. We still have only 20 ministers, but there are 60 organized congregations and 75 regular preaching places. Our pastors have considerable missionary zeal." *(Place banner at far left by itself.)*

13. NS. "I am another visitor. I come from the Norwegian Synod. We belong to the Synodical Conference, dominated by the Missouri Synod. Our ministers are trained at Missouri's Concordia Seminary. We do have one college, though. It is Bethany College in Minnesota." *(Place banner at right with Missouri.)*

14. NELC. "I represent the National Evangelical Lutheran Church. Our people came mostly from Finland. At one time we belonged to the Synodical Conference, along with the Missouri Synod and others. But we have withdrawn from that group. We stand alone." *(Place banner at left with FALC.)*

15. NLM. "I represent the Negro Lutheran Missions, organized in a separate district of the Missouri Synod. I, too, am only a visitor. We have 28 pastors and 64 organized congregations. Of course, I do not represent all the Lutheran

Negroes in North America." *(Place banner at right with Missouri.)*

16. LB. "I represent the Lutheran Brethren, which is another independent group. We put forth great evangelistic efforts and stress missions, both home and foreign. While we have only 44 active ministers, we have 354 teachers in our Sunday schools, teaching 2,755 pupils." *(Place banner to left with other independents.)*

17. ES. "I represent the Eielsen Synod. We date our origin at the time of the activity of the pastor whose name we bear, and the adoption of our constitution in Wisconsin in 1846.

We work among the Indians in Northern Wisconsin, an old people's home in Minneapolis, and a mission in India. We proceed on the principle of paying as you go. For our size we accomplish a great deal." *(Place banner to far left with other independents.)*

18. ILC. "I am from one of the 12 Independent Lutheran Congregations in North America. We belong to no synod or federation or conference." *(Place banner at left with other independents.)*

## Discussion

When all the representatives have introduced themselves, point out to your league that the banners at the far right are those groups associated in the Synodical Conference; in the center are the National Lutheran Council churches; those to the left are independent groups.

Start the discussion by asking the following questions: (Answers are suggested here. Use them, however, only after the group has had an opportunity to discuss.)

1. To which of these groups does our congregation belong? *(ULCA)*

2. From what we have heard tonight, why is it better to work with others than to try to be independent? *(Compare the statistics.)*

3. What is the biggest reason for division in the Lutheran church of North America? *(The fact that we come from so many different countries: Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, etc. Discuss why this has caused division.)*

4. Do we really have so very much division on the basis of what we teach and believe? *(No. We all have the same Augsburg Con-*



fession and Luther's Catechism. There is some difference in interpretation and opinion. We are actually closer together than many other Protestant churches. Consider some of the different Baptist groups: Northern, Southern, Free Will, Primitive, United Free Will, Free Salvation; one is called National Baptist Evangelical Life and Soul Saving Assembly of U.S.A.)

5. How can leaguers help the cause of union? (*Learn what we can about Lutheran beliefs and practice. Be loyal to our faith. Try to understand customs and practices of Lutherans of other lands. Learn Lutheran*

*hymns from other nations. If possible, visit a league in a neighboring church other than ULCA; plan social and service projects with them.*)

6. What do you know about the work of the National Lutheran Council and the Lutheran World Federation? (*Ask your pastor for his copy of The National Lutheran, March/April, 1955 issue, and see article, p. 9f, and chart, p. 32. He may have other information for you to share with your leaguers after they have told as much as they know.*)

7. What is the best way to true unity in the church? (*Scripture lesson.*)

# O Christians, Leagued Together

By Vivian Barker

## The story behind the Luther League rally hymn

### Getting ready

As program leader you are going to acquaint your group with the meaning of the Luther League rally hymn.

Set the mood for your topic by arranging a colorful worship center. Place in the center of a table a reproduction in color of the Luther League emblem. This should be the size of a dinner plate—larger if you like. Prop a Bible on one side of the emblem. Open it to Ephesians 6. On the other side of the emblem place a *Common Service Book* opened to the rally hymn, No. 578.

Emblems are easy to make—if your league doesn't have one. Paint one on sturdy poster paper, beaver board, or on a plain white dinner plate that you can buy at any dime store.

Be sure to check in advance with your pianist to be certain that he is quite familiar with the rally hymn. You will want him to play it correctly and with assurance.

Each leaguer, by the way, should have a *Common Service Book* or a similar hymnal.

### The topic

*Begin your program by having the pianist play the first line of the rally hymn very strongly, then fade out on the second line. As the music grows softer introduce the topic, saying something like this:*

"O Christians! leagued together  
To battle for the right, . . ."

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Of course. The very first words of our Luther League rally hymn always strike a responsive chord with leaguers wherever they live. We like it—we sing it often. But what do we really know about it? Do we understand exactly what we're singing? Do we really mean that we "serve without surcease"? And just what



bes "surcease" mean anyway? Who wrote the hymn? How old is it? Do we sing it correctly? Proudly? This program will tell you some of the answers.

*Assign the following parts to leaguers in advance. You will want them to present the material without reading word for word from the topic.*

### **Birth of the rally hymn**

In 1893, sixty-two years ago, when there was no Luther League rally hymn, several people clamored for a special hymn for young people. They felt it could help build a strong feeling of unity and oneness of purpose among Lutheran young people. Eventually it could unite the many Lutheran young people's societies into a national organization.

Mrs. Lillian Weaver Cassaday of Philadelphia wrote the words. After she sent them to the *Luther League Review*, George D. Boschen asked his brother-in-law, Dr. George C. F. Haas, to write the music.

Dr. Haas, pastor of St. Mark's Church, New York City, was an accomplished musician. When his wife heard the dif-

ferent tunes Dr. Haas was trying out on the organ, she reminded him that young people liked spirited music. She suggested that he compose something with more vigor in it. Dr. Haas took her suggestion seriously and wrote the stirring music to which we sing the rally hymn today.

The hymn was published in November 1893, and was sung for the first time in New York City at the Luther Day celebration. It was copyrighted in 1894 and given to the world on Reformation Day 1895.

The words of the refrain have been changed twice. In 1915 Mrs. Margaret R. Seebach wrote the refrain we use now.

The rally hymn fulfilled its purpose in helping to unite the Lutheran young people's societies. On Reformation Day 1895, in Pittsburgh, Pa., the Luther League of America was organized, joining the various societies into one national organization.

### **The words**

*This part should be given to two leaguers.*

### **Stanza 1**

FIRST LEAGUER: Lets all read aloud

together the words of the first stanza, omitting the refrain. (*All read*). This stanza presents an army, its armor or weapons, a foe, and a leader.

(*Call on leaguers to tell who and what these are. Ask for meaning of "allegiance" and "surcease". Know them yourself in case nobody else comes up with a good answer.*)

SECOND LEAGUER: (*Help along the discussion by reading to the group Ephesians 6:10-18, Psalm 24:8, and Isaiah 9:6*)

### Stanza 2

*Divide the leaguers into two groups for a five or 10-minute buzz session. First leaguer should lead Group 1 in discussing what an appropriate "War-cry" for the Christian army might be. For example, "The Lord reigneth! Alleluia!" or "A mighty fortress is our God, a trusty Shield and Weapon". Leaguers will think of other appropriate phrases or verses of scripture. First leaguer should report on their discussion when the two groups reassemble.*

*Second Leaguer, as leader and reporter, should help Group 2 discuss "conquering self" and "cheering souls with song." Where might the various divisions of Luther League fit in at this point? (Conquer self by answering the call to Christian vocation; cheer souls through missions, evangelism, and social action.)*

*The remaining verses of the stanza should be clear in the light of the discussion of the first stanza.*

### Stanza 3

FIRST LEAGUER: The third and last stanza of the rally hymn together with the refrain tell us the meaning of our Luther League emblem—Luther's coat-of-arms. I shall read the verses of this stanza separately for each part of the emblem and (*name of Second Leaguer*) will read a stanza of the poem, "Our Emblem," by Olga Erf Strecker for each part.

"We proudly bear as banner

A cross within the heart,

To show that we have chosen

Christ, the better part."

#### SECOND LEAGUER:

Then, in the heart, a cross of black  
Marks sorrow for our sin,  
Which nailed our Saviour to the cross  
Forgiveness so to win.  
If we would as our Lord's own host,  
Climb Calvary's hill with him,  
We'll keep that cross within our hearts  
And forge ahead with him.

#### FIRST LEAGUER:

"Then joy and peace and comfort  
Shall blossom as a rose,"

#### SECOND LEAGUER:

Next Luther placed the heart and cross  
Upon a rose of white—  
Symbolical of joy and peace,  
Of comfort and of light.  
And we who would be sons of light,  
Removed from worldly strife,  
Must fill our hearts with joyful faith  
And lead a Christ-like life.

#### FIRST LEAGUER:

"Until our earthly blessings  
The worth of heaven disclose."

#### SECOND LEAGUER:

Again, the rose is planted in  
A heavenly field of blue;  
The joy and bliss we feel below,  
Above we shall renew.  
And we who Luther's own are called,  
On us Christ may rely;  
We'll sturdy, loyal, faithful be,  
Our Lord we'll not deny.

#### FIRST LEAGUER:

"All hail, our glorious Saviour!  
We march where thou hast trod,  
To seek thy House of Triumph,  
The City of our God".

#### SECOND LEAGUER:

And lastly, we encircle all  
With a bright ring of gold;  
His promises are sure and true,

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Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Columbia,  
S. C. She is an accomplished organist.



his love will ne'er grow cold.  
and we who walk the way with him  
Will gain love's noblest prize,  
More precious than earth's treasures rare  
and bound with heavenly ties.

We place them all together,  
The rose, the cross, the heart,  
The heavenly field, the golden ring,  
For each must speak its part.  
If we heed well the truths they teach,  
They'll hold us safe and true;  
As they led Luther in his day,  
They'll lead us Christ-ward, too.

### Martial music

*(If possible, the church organist, choir director, or other capable adult musician should be invited to take this part. Otherwise a leaguer who is studying music might present it. He should try to get across as many of the following bits of information as possible in the time allowed).*

Almost every hymn has a tune name or the music that is different from the name of the words. The name of the tune for the rally hymn is "Luther League Hymn."

In the *Common Service Book* the tune name is on the left side at the top of the page, followed by some numbers or letters telling what the meter is. The composer's name appears on the right. The name of the author of the words is printed beneath the words of the last stanza. In the *Parish School Hymnal* and the *Christian Youth Hymnal* the tune name appears just below the name of the hymn. Then on the next line the author's name is on the left and the composer's name on the right.

There are interesting stories behind the names of tunes. For example, the name of the tune for the hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy," is Nicaea, the city in Asia Minor where the Nicene Creed was written in 325 A.D. This creed was written to make clearer and stronger the belief that Jesus was the Son of God, and that God is in three persons, a Trinity. This is the message of "Holy, Holy, Holy."

The rhythm of the rally hymn music is strong, 4/4 march time, appropriate for the bold and joyful spirit of the hymn. It is very often sung too slowly. Be careful not to drag. It would be better sung too fast than sluggishly. Be sure that the dotted half-notes at the end of each line get three full counts. The pause over the second note in the third measure of the fourth line of music is seldom observed. Watch for this, and observe the quarter rest in the next measure.

In the refrain, be careful not to sing the same note for "where" as you do for "march." Many leaguers do this frequently. The note for "where" is two whole steps lower than the one for "march". *(If there is time, get the group to sing the refrain. Check to see whether they are making this error. If so, practice it correctly.)*

The refrain builds up to a grand finale (*fee-nah'-lay*). The ascending notes of the last two measures draw to a majestic close with the purposeful pauses indicated over the next to last two notes.

With a knowledge of the history of this hymn, and a deeper understanding of its meaning, how can we help but sing it with vigor and pride? (Have you noticed that at Luther League gatherings, the young people who sing all three stanzas of the rally hymn without the aid of a hymnal invariably turn out to be the most active leaguers? Better hurry and learn the words if you don't want to be spotted as a Lazy-Leaguer).

*At this point the group should stand and sing the rally hymn, keeping in mind its wonderful message and spirit. This will begin the closing devotions.*

### Worship

#### THE OFFERING

SENTENCE PRAYERS, or a free prayer prepared ahead of time by leaguer. Include thanksgiving of Christ's leadership in life's battles, for men and women who have written and composed inspiring and uplifting words and music, and prayer for grace and strength and courage to "march where Christ has trod."

#### LUTHER LEAGUE BENEDICTION

PIANIST PLAYS rally hymn while leaguers leave.

# Your Membership Badge

BY LOUISE MARKS

Martin Luther designed the Luther League emblem

## What Is the Deeper Meaning?

Have you ever realized as you looked around you, and as you listened, that many of the things you see, and nearly every word you hear, have deeper meanings than might first be noticed? Anything which holds a deeper meaning we call a symbol. Our lives become increasingly enriched as we learn to understand the meanings of the symbols around us.

Probably the symbols that we use most in our everyday life are words. Whenever we use words, we are trying to tell someone else a thought that is in our own mind. Other people use words for the same purpose, so when a conversation is taking place, each speaker is sharing his ideas with his listeners, and each listener is trying to understand what the speaker is attempting to say. As long as the people

around us use words that we have heard before and know the meanings of, we can understand what they are saying. What we understand depends upon our past experience with the words and their meanings. We teen-agers are growing by leaps and bounds in our understanding of many different words connected with many different subjects. As our vocabularies develop, our understanding and appreciation of the world around us also grows.

Thoughts and ideas may be expressed, however, without a single word being spoken. Another area of symbols is that of colors and shapes. Many organizations, both large and small, design their insignia by choosing certain colors and shapes for the purpose of identifying themselves and of being identified by others. Certain of these insignia are seen and recognized everywhere. One such famous one belongs to the American Red Cross. Other organizations and groups that may be less well known also have insignia. Perhaps you can describe the colors and shapes in the insignia of some of the following: your school clubs, social organizations outside of school, the medical profession, the clergy, the armed branches of the military services, your country's flag, service organizations in your community.

### Important note to leader

The success of this topic's presentation will be dependent in large measure upon the visual materials that are provided for those who participate in the discussion. Advance preparation, therefore, is indispensable. See suggestions immediately following the topic material.

## Reason for it all

To help leaguers grow in an understanding of the meaning of the Luther League emblem and to help them want to identify themselves with it.

Our Luther League also has an insignia, or emblem, which when worn identifies its members. We might call it our membership badge.

## What Do These Say to You?

Let's look closely at this Luther League emblem. What do the colors and shapes of the emblem say to you? A color may say one thing to you, and a shape something else. Both the color and shape together may suggest an entirely different idea. Write down your answers and refer to them later when you discuss the ideas of Martin Luther had when he developed his coat-of-arms.

(LEADER: Distribute the sheets of paper and pencils. Show one by one each part of the emblem: The black cross, the red heart, etc. See suggestions following topic material. Give leaguers a chance to write down their reactions. Or, write on the blackboard the reactions of the group to each symbol. The answers might go something like the following, or they might be quite different. Be sure to use the leaguers' answers later in the discussion of Luther's coat of arms.)

## What did Luther say?

Now let's compare our answers with the ideas Martin Luther had when he developed this emblem.

During the time of the Protestant Reformation which began in 1517, it was a common custom in Europe for the members of all royal families and others who were well known to have a family crest, or coat-of-arms. The crest appeared on all the family possessions. When Luther founded that part of the Christian church which came to be known as Lutheran he felt that the family of Christ should also have its own coat-of-arms. As he chose the shapes and colors included in the emblem he tried to describe something of what he felt to be the meaning and purpose of the church. We have preserved a letter that he wrote to the town clerk of Nuremberg, who was his friend.

The following is the gist of what Martin Luther had to say about the emblem he developed:

The black cross is a reminder that God sent to the world his only begotten Son, and that that Son, Jesus, "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." The cross is black to remind us of the sin and sorrow connected with the cross. It is on the red heart because although it inflicts pain the cross does not

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Color</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Color and Shape Together</i>
black cross	mourning, sorrow, sad, gloomy, darkness, sin	Jesus died on it, causes terrible pain, instrument of punishment	Good Friday
red heart	warm color	needed for human life	Valentine's Day, Cupid, love
white rose	purity, honesty, color of angels (in paintings)	sweet fragrance, changes atmosphere of room	
blue field	sky, heaven		
gold ring	most precious of metals, purified by heat	without any end	wedding ring



change the color of the heart or destroy its nature. "It does not kill but rather preserves life," Luther's letter states. (*Compare leaguers' responses about black cross.*)

Often we hear the words: "I believe it in my heart." Luther felt that the cross "should stand in the red heart, for from the heart must we believe, and from the heart come the issues of life." The red heart reminds us that because we believe (in our hearts) and accept God's love, our lives are richer and fuller and happier. (*Compare leaguers' responses to the red heart.*)

The idea for the rose came from a prophesy in Isaiah that said that at Jesus' coming, "the desert shall blossom as a rose." This means poetically that Jesus will bring life where there was only death and hopelessness before. White is the color of angels and since angels are creatures of heaven, it suggests that a relationship with God gives a joy, comfort, and peace that cannot come in any other way apart from that relationship. Another idea suggested by the symbol of a rose is that this joy can reach out into all the world and change it in somewhat the same way the fragrance of a rose can change the atmosphere (odor) of a room. (*Compare leaguers' responses to the*

*white rose.*)

The light blue field makes us think of the sky, and easily we go on to associate the sky with heaven, if we think in terms of the Bible. The joy which comes as a result of fellowship with God is the beginning of heavenly joy, and continues throughout this life into the life beyond death. (*Compare leaguers' responses to the blue field.*)

The golden ring reminds us that God's love knows no end. No matter how bad we are, nor how unworthy we may feel to receive God's love, God still reaches out to us, seeking to bring us into a love

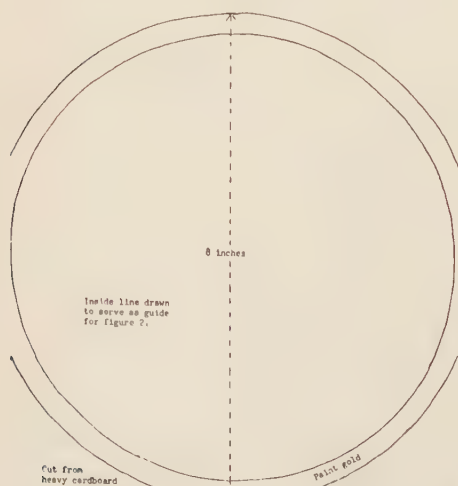


Figure 1.



Figure 2.

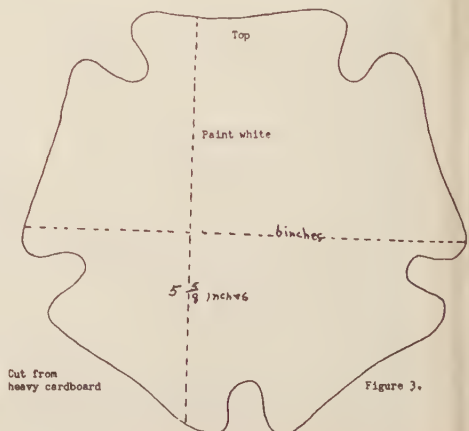


Figure 3.

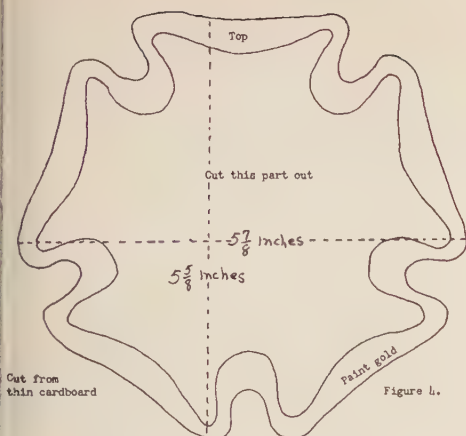


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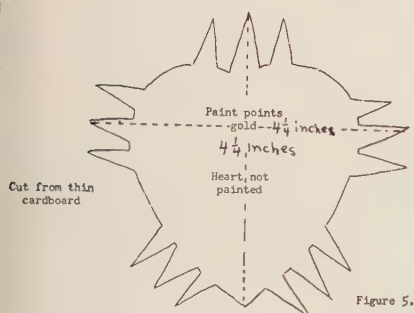


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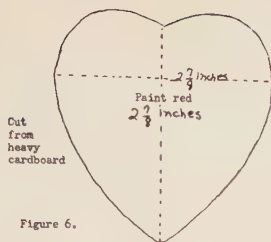


Figure 6.

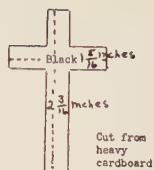


Figure 7.



ng, forgiving relationship with him. Gold is thought to be the most valuable metal. Our experience of God's love for us is valuable above all other possessions and earthly pleasures. (*Compare leaguers' responses to the gold ring.*)

### What do these say to you?

Now, we shall put the emblem together as Luther intended it.

Leader: Place the symbols in their proper locations with the use of Scotch tape, or allow the leaguers to do so. Encourage leaguers to discuss this activity freely. Arrange the emblem in a standing position, and place a candle on either side. Announce that a brief worship service will conclude the program,

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following which all will leave the room quietly. As the pianist plays softly, light the candles. The following worship suggestions are offered. Use them, or change them as you like.

### Worship experience

#### SOFT MUSIC:

Luther League Rally hymn, CSB 578, played quietly while candles are lighted.

#### FIRST LEAGUER:

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life. (*John 3:16*)

#### SECOND LEAGUER:

We thank you, our heavenly Father, that you sent to us your Son, our Lord Jesus. We cannot understand or feel all the pain and heartache he suffered for us, but of this we can be sure, he went through it all because he loved us and because he wanted to bring us closer to you.

#### SING:

"In the Cross of Christ, I Glory," CSB 62, verses 1 and 2.

#### FIRST LEAGUER:

Jesus once said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (*Matthew 5:8*)

## SECOND LEAGUER:

O God, we thank you that you search our hearts and know us as we really are. We thank you that there is no time when you are apart from us. Help us to stay close to you and to know with all certainty that you have made our hearts your dwelling place. May we soon come to realize that you are always at work within us so long as we permit.

SING:

"My faith looks up to Thee," CSB 360, stanzas 1 and 2.

## FIRST LEAGUER:

Isaiah, a prophet who lived a long time ago, said of Jesus that at his coming, "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose." (Isaiah 35:1b)

## SECOND LEAGUER:

Lord Jesus, we thank you that you are here in our group tonight, for you promised once that wherever two or three gather together in your name, that you would be in their midst. Help us to feel and want your presence in our lives always. Help us so that everyday we live, we may show clearly to others by our attitudes and behaviour that we have had a real and meaningful fellowship with you.

SING:

"Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All," CSB 351, stanzas 1 and 3.

## FIRST LEAGUER:

A Psalmist once said, "The heavens declare the glory of God." Another said, "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there."

## SECOND LEAGUER:

Our Father, you have made a glorious world for us to live in. We look above us and see the sun by day and the moon and stars by night, and remember there is so much above and beyond us that we will never understand. And then we look at ourselves, and realize that you have made us in just as mysterious a way as you have made the heavens. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us. We cannot attain unto it.

We thank you that when we learn to trust and love you, we can begin to know a little of what heaven is like, for heaven can be wherever you are and wherever people seek to do your will. We commit our whole selves to you, therefore. Let our lives show forth the kindness and generosity and peace that can be ours because we have walked closely with you.

SING:

"Beautiful Saviour," CSB 129, stanzas 3 and 1.

## FIRST LEAGUER:

The last book of the Bible has this verse in it: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8)

## SECOND LEAGUER:

O God, you are eternal. You have always been and will always be. We thank you that we can be a part of your plan for the world. Help us to fit ourselves into your scheme of things, remembering that you know better than we where and how you can use us best. We thank you that we can count on your love in our lives that goes on without

end. Even when we are selfish and want our own way, you are patient with us and work with us gently and kindly until we are ready to do your will. Help us to follow the example Jesus set for us in the Garden of Gethsemane, so that we can say even when the going is hard, "Not my will, but thine be done." Then, and only then can we be a part of your eternal plan for the world. Amen.

SING:

"Take my Life and Let it be Consecrated to Thee," CSB 382, stanzas 1, 5, 6.

SOFT MUSIC:

Luther League Rally Hymn while candles are extinguished. All should leave the room silently.

## Items needed for topic

A LUTHER LEAGUE EMBLEM, made preferably of construction paper. This may be made easily by frequently referring to the drawings accompanying this topic.

Have on hand for the worship service which will immediately follow the topic: A small stand against which to lean the emblem during the worship service, some Scotch tape, candles and holders with candles.

The worship experience is designed to grow out of the newly learned meanings of the symbols of the emblem. Place the symbols in their proper place with the Scotch tapes. Arrange the emblem, standing up in the middle of a small table with a burning candle on either side.

Have ready for distribution at the proper time a *sheet of paper and a pencil* for each one present. Across the top of the paper there should be four columns. Each leaguer may make his own if desired. In the appropriate columns are to be written the leaguer's response to each of the colors and shapes in the emblem. (Table should be similar to that on page 39.) A possible alternative would be to use the blackboard in group discussion rather than to record individual responses.

Gather *pictures of the insignias* of other organizations and groups, or better yet, collect if possible several actual *pins, seals*, etc. of these organizations. The United Lutheran Publication House, 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, has available various items marked with the Luther League emblem, such as pins and other jewelry, seals of various sizes, napkins, etc. Write for further information.

● Adversities do not make the man either weak or strong, but they reveal what he is.—*Tit-Bits*.

● If we knew as much about mental health as we do about physical health, an epidemic of hate would be considered as dangerous as an epidemic of typhoid.—*Viking Vacuum*.



# How to Study the Bible

By Kay L. Moldenke

## Through it the Word speaks to you

### Leader's choice

You're handling a double-barreled purpose in this program. The first idea is to spark a lively interest in Bible reading among your leaguers. The second is to show leaguers how they can study the Bible.

To have a barrel of fun in getting across the first feature, introduce the program in one of the following ways:

*Bible quiz or Bible baseball.* HIGH IDEALS has carried several quizzes in the last year that you might spring on your crowd. Or make up your own. Or scout around in your public library for books containing Bible quizzes.

*Bible verse roll call.* In this plan, leaguers answer roll call with a Bible verse and tell where it is found. (If you want to test the Bible wits of your leaguers—let them guess in what book in the Bible each verse is located.)

*Hidden meaning.* Have on hand several versions of the Bible, like the King James Revised Standard, Moffatt, Goodspeed, J. B. Phillips. Read the following verses from the King James version. Then let the leaguers guess the meanings of the terms and of the verses. Psalm 88:13, Matthew 19:14, Mark 4:44, Mark 14:40, Luke 22:51, Matthew 26:31, Mark 14:33. After the group has discussed each verse, read it from another version in which the meaning will be clearer.

*Bible charades.* Divide your league into groups of three or four. Give each a Bible story to pantomime before the whole league. Then let everyone guess the story being acted out.

*Films.* Show one of the following: *The Bible on the Table*, available from your nearest Religious Film Library, rental \$8.00; 45 *Tioga Street*, order from United Lutheran Publication House, 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, Pa., rental \$2.50; *At Work with the Word, Thy Word Giveth Light, The Whole Armor*, available free from the American Bible Society, 450 Park Avenue, New York, New York.

For the second half of your double feature you will need Bibles and a blackboard. If possible secure a Bible dictionary, Bible con-

### To the advisor

The study and use of the Bible should be a basic part of your youth program. It is of prime importance that the Bible come alive for our young people. Its truths, its lessons, its heroes, its stories can guide their everyday living. Through it they will find God and come to a real acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. This is no small responsibility.

Let the checklist in the topic guide you in discovering areas of Bible study that need to be emphasized in your league.

Be sure that you live with the Bible and that its teachings motivate your life.

Work closely with the leader of this topic. He will need considerable help in putting across methods of Bible study mentioned here.

cordance, and a Bible atlas. Your pastor has copies in his library.

Mimeograph or type enough copies of the Bible-reading checklist to give one to each leaguer.

You might secure from the American Bible Society the following tracts: "Where to Look in the Bible," "Youth Turns to the Bible," "Worthwhile Ways of Reading the Bible," and "The Bible in the Home." Each of these costs 35c per hundred copies. The following are available at two for 1c: "Poetry of the Bible," "Stories of the Bible;" and "Songs, Prayers, and Benedictions of the Bible." (In small quantities these materials are available free.)

*Following the first feature of your program (the quiz or charades) introduce the second feature which concerns how to read the Bible.*

*You can create a spell-binding opening by playing up the section "Diary of a Bible." Lead into this part by saying something like this:*

Our Lutheran church is often referred to as the Bible church. We are sometimes called the Bible-believing Christians. Yet, how familiar are we with the Bible? Some of us think it is a good luck charm. Most of us use it casually.

Suppose your Bible kept a diary. Would it read like this?

*Here dim the lights. Shine a flashlight on a Bible you have placed on the center of a table in easy eye-range of your group. Station yourself out of sight of your audience (behind a screen or in the rear of the auditorium) and read the following section as if you were the diary of the Bible come to life.*

### Diary of a Bible

January 15—Been resting quietly for a week. The first few nights after the first of the year my owner read me regularly, but he has forgotten me, I guess.

February 2—Clean-up. I was dusted with other things and put back in my place.

February 8—Owner used me for a short time after dinner, looking up a few references. Went to Sunday school.

March 7—Clean-up. Dusted and in my old place again. Have been down in the hall since my trip to Sunday school.

April 2—Busy day. Owner led a league meeting and had to look up references. He had an awful time finding one, though it was right there in its place all the time.

May 5—In Grandma's lap all afternoon. She is here on a visit. She let a tear drop fall on Colossians 2:5-7.

May 6—In Grandma's lap again this afternoon. She spent most of her time on I Corin-

thians 12 and the last four verses of the 15th chapter.

May 10—Grandma gone. Back in the old place. She kissed me good-bye.

June 3—Had a couple of four-leaf clovers stuck in me today.

July 1—Packed in a trunk with clothes and other things. Off on a vacation, I guess.

July 7—Still in the trunk.

July 10—Still in the trunk, although nearly everything else has been taken out.

July 15—Home again and in my old place. Quite a journey, though I do not see why I went.

August 1—Rather stuffy and hot. Have two magazines, a novel, and an old hat on top of me. Wish they would take them off.

September 5—Clean-up. Dusted and set right again.

September 10—Used by Mary a few minutes ago. She is writing a letter to a friend whose brother has just died, and wanted an appropriate verse.

(From "My Bible and I," by A. H. Baldinger)  
*Up go the lights. Present the following in your own words.*

Let's admit that we find the Bible hard to understand and difficult to use. Perhaps you feel like Myrtle, a young girl in the play *Green Pastures*. When her pastor asked how she liked the Bible, she replied, "Oh, it's just wonderful, Mr. Deshee, but I don't understand a word of it."

Maybe you don't know your way around in its chapters. Perhaps you are puzzled by unfamiliar words and strange customs. Suppose we check our Bible reading habits to uncover what you really think about it.

### Bible reading checklist

I read the Bible: \_\_\_\_\_ daily; \_\_\_\_\_ once a week; \_\_\_\_\_ almost never.

The versions of the Bible in my home are: \_\_\_\_\_ King James; \_\_\_\_\_ Revised Standard Version; \_\_\_\_\_ others (list).

The Bible to me is: \_\_\_\_\_ dry; \_\_\_\_\_ interesting; \_\_\_\_\_ exciting.

When I read I: \_\_\_\_\_ usually understand; \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes understand; \_\_\_\_\_ never understand.

I read the Bible because: \_\_\_\_\_ I want to; \_\_\_\_\_ I think I should; \_\_\_\_\_ I'm forced to.

Kay L. Moldenke is parish worker at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, New York City. She is originally from Pittsfield, Mass.

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The completed checklists may be given to your advisor.

The Bible is a library of 66 books. Its authors were statesmen, soldiers, kings, priests, farmers, tax collectors, fishermen, shepherds, prophets. Some wrote prose; some wrote poetry. There were biographers, historians, song writers, story tellers, and sermon writers. Part of the authors wrote in Hebrew, others wrote in Greek. Some of the books were written in Palestine; the rest, in other parts of Asia Minor and Europe.

Go through the pages reliving the events with the people of the Bible. It's easy to imagine you are Davy Crockett, or to picture yourself shipwrecked on an island with Robinson Crusoe. Why not imagine that you are Joshua conquering Canaan? Or Paul being shipwrecked on the way to Rome.

with their courage. Pull with them in their weaknesses. After you have lived with them for a while, ask them to live with you.

Use the blackboard for the next sections, listing the important points and helps.

Use the Revised Standard Version with one or more of these helps:

2. Bible concordance (Cruden's or Young's) to help you trace some word or topic through the Bible when you don't know where to look.

3. Bible dictionary (Westminster or Harper) to find the meaning of proper names and Bible words.

4. Bible atlas to help you locate Bible places.

Prayer for guidance as you begin your study of the Bible. This is too often neglected. Let the Holy Spirit guide you in understanding the truths of the Bible.

There are at least four systems by which you can read the Bible.

1. BY BOOK. Start with Mark. Then you might read Acts, Galatians, Philemon, Philippians, Colossians, Corinthians, Matthew, James, Psalms, Genesis.

2. BY BIOGRAPHY. In the youth of the Bible you will recognize your own hopes, fears, dreams and needs. Read David, Daniel, Timothy, Samuel, Ruth.



3. BY TOPIC. Prayer, love, forgiveness, marriage. Use the Bible concordance to select your topics.

4. BY YOUR OWN NEED. For guidance see "Where to Look in the Bible" and "Youth Turns to the Bible," tracts printed by the American Bible Society.

Memorize favorite passages. Repeat them often to yourself. They will help you when you feel depressed, lonely, or troubled. You will also want to be armed with verses of the Word so that you can be a better witness to others of your faith in Christ.

Mark your Bible freely. Underline verses, words, ideas, that are important to you. Make notes in the margins.

### Three steps to take

BE A GOOD OBSERVER. On your first reading, skim through the book as a whole to discover the purpose of the author. Ask yourself these questions:

1. *Who* is the author and to whom is he writing?

2. *When* was the book written?

3. *Where* was it written? Where does the action take place?

4. *Why* was it written? What is its purpose?

5. *What* are the main events, teachings, and ideas?

Reread by chapters. Chart the book. Title

the chapters. See if you can determine the main divisions. Jot down key words or verses (See chart on top of Page 45)

Study by paragraphs. Chart with titles. Ask yourself WHO are the key persons in the paragraph? WHERE does the action take place? WHAT are the main events? WHY is this paragraph included?

Use your senses. "Put yourself in his place"

1. SEE Elijah on Mt. Carmel as he taunts the prophets of Baal. SEE Joseph give corn to his brothers in the midst of a famine in Israel. SEE Jesus drive the moneychangers from the temple.

2. HEAR Amos speak in court. HEAR Jesus rebuke the Pharisees. HEAR the shouts of "Hosanna" as Jesus rides into Jerusalem. LISTEN for the chirps of the birds of the air.

3. SMELL the lilies of the field.

4. TASTE the manna from heaven.

5. TOUCH the hem of Jesus' garment.

6. Use your IMAGINATION. Ask yourself what happened to the rich young ruler after he went away sorrowing. Ask yourself what the disciples did during the 50 days before Pentecost. Imagine yourself at a home in Asia Minor when a letter arrives from Paul. Put yourself in Isaac's sandals as his father binds him to the altar.

Look for links between events, or between words and actions that can clue you to the meaning of the message.

MATTHEW	4:17	16:21
	"FROM THAT TIME Jesus began to preach..."	"FROM THAT TIME Jesus began to show..."

1. CAUSE AND EFFECT—"From that time" implies that certain conditions have been met. Incidents have occurred which result in the action following. Find cause and effect in Matthew 4:24; Matthew 7:28-29. (See chart on bottom of Page 46)

2. CONTRAST—Look for signs by which the author tells you he is introducing a family of opposites. "But," "however," "nevertheless" are markers for this. See Matthew 5:21, 22. The Sermon on the Mount is full of contrasts.

3. REPETITION—Same words, phrases, and clauses. Like the use of "straightway" in Mark 16:7 and "the Kingdom of Heaven" in Matthew 13:12.

4. COMPARISON—Association of like things. Like, for instance, the parables: "The Kingdom of Heaven is LIKE."

There are many other laws—interchange, climax, continuity, substantiation. But the four described above will get you off to a good start in your study.

### Interpret What you read

Do you understand the meaning of the words and phrases of the passage? Never hesitate to admit you need a dictionary or perhaps a version in more modern English. Consider: Matthew 26:73; Matthew 5:22; Mark 12:42; Luke 22:39.

Are there references to Eastern customs which you might not understand? For example, the long genealogy in Matthew 1 seems foreign to us, but is of extreme importance to the Oriental mind.

Translate in your own words. State the central idea of the paragraph in one sentence if possible.

### Apply to your own life

What does this mean to *me* today? Where do I come in? In the light of what I've read, how can I change my behavior and attitudes? How can this help me to be a better Christian? Read the Bible regularly. Read it daily. Make it a real friend. In human friendships we get to know a person, to enjoy being in his company, to love him only by being with

him often. The more you are in contact with him, the more you understand him. The same is true of the Bible. Make it a constant companion. Get better acquainted with it. You will soon become inseparable friends. Your personalities will merge. It will leave its mark on your life. By being better friends with the Bible, you will be better friends with the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Plans for further study

Ask the leaguers to jot down questions about the Bible and some of its teachings that they would like to have answered. Invite your pastor to answer them at the next meeting. Or assign the questions to several members for research.

Select one book of the Bible. Study it thoroughly.

Let each leaguer select one person from the Bible and discover everything he can learn about him. Then share with the group the traits, thoughts, and actions of the Bible personality that will give help to the leaguers.

### Daily Bible reading

Read Mark. On the first day skim through the whole book (it's not very long). Then read one chapter each day, using the suggestions given in this topic for Bible study.

### Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet. Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee."

HYMN: "O Word of God Incarnate"

STORY: "Story of the Blind Leper" (Page 28, Sept. 1952 issue of *International Journal of Religious Education*). Well worth going far to find.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 119:18; II Tim. 3:16; II Tim. 2:15; Romans 15:4; Psalm 119:11; Psalm 119:33-24. (Let five or six leaguers read these.)

SENTENCE PRAYERS

HYMN: "Book of Books Our People's Strength"

● More people will go to bed hungry in the world tonight than will go to bed well fed. There was very little more food produced in 1954 than in 1938, but some 200 million more people to be fed.—Norris E. Dodd.

● Are young people terribly bad nowadays? Not for one moment would we minimize the seriousness of the juvenile delinquency problem . . . But there is a brighter side.

A short news story the other day told of a senior class in an Illinois high school. The 25 members of the class voted that the \$800 they had saved for a six-day vacation trip to the Ozarks be given to their adviser whose house had burned down.—*Standard*.

# At Work with the Bible

By Kay L. Moldenke

## The twin to the last topic

### Guides for the leader

This session is the twin of the last topic. That program set the stage for *individual Bible study*. In this one you will lead your league in choosing an activity for *group Bible study*.

To discover the Bible study project that your leaguers want most to do, you may give them a multiple-choice test. Of course, this won't be quite like the one you take in school. For the test in this topic will be oral.

Listed below you will find seven activities in group Bible study. Present them to your group. Write the key idea of each on a blackboard. Then lead the group in discussing and voting on the one that they would like to do.

If your group isn't enthusiastic about the suggestions listed below, then let your teenagers hammer out plans for a project that is tailored to their interests.

It might be easier to get into "huddles" for discussion if your league has a lot of members. In this plan divide the group into "huddles" each having three or four leaguers. The huddles discuss the Bible study activities, selecting one they would like to plan. The league reassembles. One person from each huddle reports its choice. These reports then tee off the group's discussion on the high-interest projects and final decision on one.

When your league has adopted one plan decide on how it will be carried out. You will want to be very sure that it really follows through on the activity.

### Planning the worship

You've got the chance to prepare an impressive worship service—one that will be very different from your usual league devotions. So put your brain cells to work in planning how you will lead it.

If you don't have enough leaguers to take the parts in the "Roll Call of Biblical People" select just a few of the persons listed. Or you might make a tape recording of the "Roll Call," asking different adults to read each role. Then play the recording at the proper time in the service.

Place an open Bible on your worship center. Behind it put one large white candle. This should be lit before the service. On either side of the Bible, place two smaller candles. Light these during the singing of the first hymn.

### A service of worship

HYMN: "Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord" or "Break Thou the Bread of Life".

ROLL CALL OF BIBLICAL PEOPLE: (Station participants, who have memorized the short parts given, in various parts of the room. Extinguish the lights, letting the candles burn.)

"I am Abraham. I heard God call me to leave the city of Ur to go out into a new land. I obeyed his call and became the father of the Hebrew people."

"I am Jacob. I had a vision of God in the lonely desert. The tribes of Israel were named from a family of sons."

"I am Joseph. My brothers sold me into slavery. My master took me to Egypt. Here I rose to be food administrator of the land, and I saved my family in a time of famine."

"I am Moses. I delivered my people from bondage and led them out into the wilderness. I helped God make a nation of an enslaved people."

"I am Joshua. I followed Moses as leader of the Hebrew people. Under my leadership they entered and conquered the land of Canaan and made a home for themselves there."

"I am Samuel, the last of the judges. I anointed the first two kings of Israel."

"I am David, the second and the greatest of all the kings of the united Hebrew kingdom."

"I am Solomon. Men called me wise. But I taxed the people so heavily that the northern tribes rebelled and started a new kingdom of their own."

"I am Elijah. I stood alone for the true God while all the people were worshiping the god Baal."

"I am Amos, the herdsman-prophet who came from the wilderness of Tekoa to Bethel. The royal priest tried to make me go back home. But I stood my ground and gave the people God's message."



"I am Isaiah. I received a message from God in the temple. I stood by King Hezekiah when the Assyrians were threatening the city of Jerusalem. God answered our prayers and delivered us from the enemy."

"I am Jeremiah. It was my task to warn the people of Judah of the impending fall of the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was taken. Many Jews were led, but I remained behind and tried to help my fellow countrymen in and about the ruined city."

"I am Nehemiah. I went to Jerusalem and helped the people rebuild the wall around their city."

"I am John the Baptist. It was my privilege to prepare the people of the coming Christ. I baptized him in the River Jordan."

"I am Peter. I was a fisherman. Jesus called me to follow him. I spent three wonderful years with him in Galilee and Judea. All the rest of my life I told the good news of the Son of God."

"I am Zachaeus. I was a tax-collector. Jesus came into my house one day. I became a changed man."

"I am Mary Magdalene. My life was also changed by Jesus."

"I am Paul. I was the chief persecutor of the followers of Jesus. After I received a vision of Christ near the Damascus road, I gave my life to the preaching of the gospel. I was taken prisoner in Rome and gave my life in the cause of Christ." (Taken from *Exploring the Bible With Intermediaries*, Lucille Desjardins, p. 90.)

HYMN: "Shine Thou Upon Us, Lord"

PRAYER: *Leaguers kneel. Ask each to quote a Bible verse. Follow with a bidding prayer. Then the leader gives the first of the following statements. Then the group prays silently for that which he has "bid" them to petition. The leader next bids the group pray for the second petition.)*

Let us thank God for his Word and for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us thank God for the privilege of reading the Bible in our own language.

Let us ask God to give us a greater desire to know more of the Bible.

Let us ask God to help us use it as a guide for our lives.

LORD'S PRAYER

## Study the Bible together

1. Establish in each league home the practice of family worship. Many helps are available. Schedule a "Family Nite" and promote family Bible reading and worship. Use the *Family Bible* or *The Bible on the Table or Their Future Yours*. Both may be obtained from the audio-visual department of the Lutheran Publication House. Write to the Parish Education Board, 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, Pa., for free materials and suggestions on family worship. Try to have 100 per cent family Bible reading in your league.

2. Schedule midweek Bible study for one month or longer. Write to the Lutheran Bible Institute, 1619 Portland Ave., Minneapolis 4, Minn., for information on their Bible study courses. Select one and use it for your study. If you are close to Minneapolis or one of the divisions in Teaneck, N. J., Seattle, Wash., or Los Angeles, Cal., plan a visit as a group.

Attend a youth rally there.

3. Start a choral reading group. You will find books on the art of choral speaking in your public library. The psalms, beatitudes, proverbs, sermon on the Mount, and any of the poetry sections of the Bible are especially suitable. Such a choir adds great beauty and meaning to worship.

4. Form a rhythmic choir. This is a fairly new field, but one which is most satisfying if undertaken seriously. You will want to read Margaret Fisk's *The Art of the Rhythmic Choir*. A short condensation of the book is in the Feb. 1953 issue of the *International Journal of Religious Education*. A rhythmic choir seeks through symbolic movement to interpret stories or passages of scripture. Psalm 23, 27, 100, 149, and 150; I Corinthians 13; the Prodigal Son, and the story of Ruth might be chosen. You will need an adult leader for this project—perhaps the organist or choir director would be willing to guide you. Don't attempt it unless you feel you can handle it.

5. Dramatize a Bible story or parable after detailed study. If there is a photographer in the house, film it on 35mm Kodachrome. Be sure to do research on props and costumes to make it as authentic as possible. The Lost Coin, the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Christmas Story, any of the Acts of the Apostles might be enacted. Watch out for non-Biblical, or modern objects or features on location.

6. Write a radio drama of a Bible story. It might be patterned after the "You Are There" TV series. Record it on tape.

7. Try the "Circular Response" method on a Bible study. It may be coupled with the Västerås method (after the city by that name where the method was first used). Allow each leaguer to make a comment on the passage of scripture being studied. A leaguer may pass if he so desires, but no leaguer may speak up twice until it's his turn again.

Each person jots down his thoughts and discoveries using one of three symbols. He puts a question mark beside a passage in which he finds unanswered problems or questions; a candle near a passage that has brought new light and understanding to his faith; and an arrow next to a passage that will point up attitudes and behavior that need to be changed.

This method is also excellent for individual Bible study.

Possibilities for group Bible study are numberless. Use your imagination and ingenuity in planning them. Make the Bible live for yourselves and for others.

# Christmas Music Box

BY H. EDMUND PFEIFER

## The air is filled with joyous music

### Dear leader:

This program is one that could possibly use up your entire league. It would be well to have plans made and ready to go at least two weeks before the topic is scheduled for production. You'll need a disc jockey, at least one choir, maybe more.

We'd like to see more of you know some of the world's best Christmas music as we have it in its many forms, especially its hymns. To do this you might get the best results by making sure that nobody will be just a spectator at the meeting.

We mentioned the disc boy a bit ago and some choirs. We say choirs because you'll want to use your more gifted voices in singing the excerpts from the *Common Service Book*. For the other song music either a selected group or the mass of the league can serve as choir.

Perhaps you'll want to use one or more story tellers at appropriate places. There can be something for everybody to do if you'll give them the chance.

If possible, tap your treasury to buy a few records and donate them to your congregation's library after their use. We'd suggest these as starters:

J. S. Bach—"Music Of Jubilee" (Columbia ML 4435); "The New Born Child" (Cantata 122—Bach 523).

G. B. Shea—"Inspirational Songs" (Victor LPM 12).

"Jo Stafford Sings American Folk Songs" (Capitol H75).

You'll need a 33 1/3 machine to play these records. If purchase isn't a good idea for you, a good record shop will loan you ma-

chine and records. But if you feel like splurging you could add these records:

J. S. Bach—*Christmas Oratorio* (Vox 77 or Remington 199-118).

G. F. Handel—*Messiah* (Angel 3510 among others).

You'll need a good supply of *Common Service Books*, *Parish School Hymnals*, and stories behind some of the Christmas hymns you'll need books like *The Gospel in Hymns* by A. E. Bailey, New York, Scribner's Sons or *Lyric Religion* by H. A. Smith, New York, D. Appleton-Century. Perhaps your pastor could lend you these books or tell you where you can get them.

### The topic

The program itself, then, could take this form: Sing Hymn 55 *PSH* (entire group). This time of year it feels as if the air is filled with music, as if there were a song in the air. It all tells us the same story we read in Matthew 1:18-23 and Luke 2:1-20. (*Here begin the scripture read.*) (*A prayer may then follow*).

In another week Christmas will be most over for most of us. We'll have to wait another year to hear and sing "Silent Night" and "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

Christmas hymns have a special joy about them quite different from the joy about Easter hymns. On Easter it feels as if the whole world is shouting, "Hallelu-



"Lujah." Easter joy is like the releasing of a steel spring that's been wound tighter and tighter all through Lent. On Easter the spring is freed and we burst forth with joy in our risen Lord.

Christmas joy seems to be more ready, gradually increasing like climbing a flowered hill on a beautiful day. The walk is increasingly pleasant, the top gets closer until there we are at the top and beauty is all around us. So with the days before Christmas.

Another difference in the music of

Christmas and Easter is in who wrote it. It appears that more name composers have written music for Easter than for Christmas. Many of our Christmas hymns were written by just people. We don't know where a lot of our carols came from. It does seem that Christmas appeals more to the tender emotions in all of us.

Long before Jesus was born the prophet Isaiah sang of the birth of a Saviour who would release the people from their sins. (*Sing No. 533 CSB.*) We



don't know who wrote this hymn but it's based on part of the epistle for the early service on Christmas Day. (*Here have scripture read.*)

Some of the most beautiful (and like our Lord, revolutionary) words spoken before Jesus' birth come from his mother. We call them the Magnificat and we use them in our Vespers. The words are written in Luke 1:46-55 and in the CSB on page 43. (*Here have sung by select choir.*)

And who doesn't know the song the angels sang to the shepherds as they listened to the announcement of his birth. We use it every Sunday in The Service as the beginning of The Gloria in Excelsis. We heard them read earlier in our opening scripture, remember. (*Here have them sung.*)

Even after his birth we have another song closely connected to this season. We use this one quite often, every time we have Communion. It's called the Nunc Dimittis and was said by Simeon when Jesus was taken to the temple for the first time. It's written in Luke 2:29-32 and on page 26 of the CSB. (*Here have sung.*)

Never was a child born with such singing in his praise and honor. We have nothing today to compare with the joy that split the heavens with song at the birth of God's Son. For this is God, keeping his promise to his people to come to them when they need him most. The angels had to sing their joy. God was with his people.

So through all the years since his birth, Jesus' people have remembered his coming with both tenderness and jubilant thanksgiving.

### Trumpets trill

We didn't mean earlier that the great composers of the ages had left Christmas alone. Perhaps the greatest of them all, J. S. Bach, has given us Christmas music that is downright exciting. Trumpets blare and trill with unbelievable life and drums roar and voices shout and the organ becomes a dancing thing to give

The Rev. H. Edmund Pfeifer is pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Va.

praise to the baby Jesus. But Bach also tender as a mother's touch. Listen to some of the music he has given to us. (*Here play the first section of "Music Jubilee" and a chorus from "The New Born Child." Not too much steak all once. Save some room for dessert.*)

We often hear sections of Handel's *Messiah* sung at Christmas although it was written for the Easter season. The mighty choruses make us feel as if the angels were still singing to us. (*Here play appropriate section, if available.*)

Some of the hymns we have in our *Common Service Book* have music written by Beethoven, Mendelssohn or Sullivan, all composers who have felt on their hearts the hand of God's love at Christmastime.

But no matter how great these may be we still know best the music written by just people, many of them unknown. Probably the most famous unknown writer is the person who wrote "Away In A Manger." We usually think that unknown composers only lived in Europe but this little gem seems to have appeared first in Philadelphia at a Sunday school program about 100 years ago. And that's all we know. But we all know the hymn and that's what's important. (*No. 40 PSH. Entire group.*)

We usually think of spirituals and mountain music as being of the folk tapping variety. But "Sweet Little Jesus Child" is as rich as any formal hymn. And "I Wonder As I Wander" belongs with the best Christmas music of the centuries. (*Play "Sweet Little Jesus Child" from Inspirational Songs record. "I Wonder As I Wander" from Jo Stafford record.*)

Neither of these songs sounds as joyful as "Joy to the World," but they have them a true, deep, lasting joy in the birth

Jesus that often is missed in our more obbling carols.

Of course, when we got to Europe we d Christmas songs that have grown ough hundreds of years. From France, "The First Noel" (No. 35 PSH), from ly, "Come Hither, Ye Faithful" (No. PSH), from Germany, "Behold, A anch is Growing" (*which we have al- dy sung*), from England, "God Rest ou, Merry Gentlemen" No. 30 PSH), and many more. (*Here sing first stanza "God Rest You" or any of the others, you wish.*)

These are songs that tell us a story of e tender love that has been in the arts of people ever since they heard of e birth of the Lord Jesus. These are ngs that had to be sung. They grew t of love, nourished by gratitude. They e like the millions of unknown Chris- ns who have come and gone on this rth and have handed on, generation to neration, the beautiful Christmas joy at you and I have inherited.

However, we know more of the hymns Christmas that were written by known riters. While "Silent Night" certainly

isn't the oldest of our hymns, it certainly is one of the first to come to mind when we think of Christmas hymns. Talk about Tin Pan Alley methods of writing words and music—"Silent Night" tops them all. (*Here have story told and sing No. 20 PSH.*)

A similarly interesting story might be told of how "O Little Town of Bethle- hem" came to be written. (*Have told and sing No. 23 PSH.*) (*After looking through the books on hymns you might want to substitute or expand this couplet of hymns. Perfectly alright. Won't make me unhappy at all.*)

So many of our Christmas hymns have stories behind them that make us wonder how such lasting beauty could come from such almost casual writing. But the joy of Christmas is such a growing, bloom- ing flower that quite often it takes only a little incident to make the joy appear in words and music.

So, as this Christmas comes to its climax let its joyful music grow in you until you too will have to sing with the angels, "Glory to the newborn King". (No. 13 PSH)

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## Pen Pals

These teen-agers would like to write to other Luther Leaguers

BARBARA BUSHONG, New Market, Va. Sports: Basketball, swimming, and bad- minton. "I also like to play music."

DIANE CONOPAST, 37 Grant St., Rock- ville, Conn. Age: 15. Interests: Rink skating, horseback riding, swimming, tennis, and dancing.

BEVERLY KROG, 243 South Colfax, West Point, Nebr. Age: 13. Interests:

Horseback riding, camping, hiking, danc- ing, skating, and swimming. Plays the clarinet.

JOAN YODER, Box 295B, Godshall Rd., R. D. No. 2, Telford, Pa. Age: 15. Hob- bies: Skating, pen pals, accordion, and piano.

LUCILLE MOYER, 21 South Main St., Hatfield, Pa. Age: 16. Hobbies: Pen pals, stamp club, and reading.



# Candlelight Service

By Grace and Charles Geiger

## The Christmas story through scripture and music

### To the leader

For this Christmas candlelight service, if the group is not too large, it is suggested that everyone be seated in a circle around a table. Each person is given a small candle at the beginning of the service (Small candles and drip cards may be obtained from the Lutheran Publication House) On the table should be a large five-pointed star that can be cut from cardboard or crepe paper, preferably white. At each of its five points a tall white candle should stand. After the scripture has been read, these candles should be lit by the leader as he says, "Ye are the light of the world", and "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven".

At the proper time in the service, each person's candle will be lit. The pattern of a star within a circle indicates the Bethlehem star which shone at Christ's birth, showing us, by sending his Son, God's never-ending, all-encircling love.

If possible, have a map of the Holy Land. While the opening story of the candlelight service is being read, someone could indicate on the map the distance between Nazareth and Bethlehem, travelled by Mary and Joseph.

### Program outline

PRELUDE: Soft Christmas music by pianist.

CALL TO WORSHIP: Arise, shine, for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. (*Isa. 60:1*)

HYMN: "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

SCRIPTURE: John 1:1-17. (*Light candles of star*).

OFFERING: Soft Christmas music.

PRAYER:

O God, who hast given us this Christmas time to shine with the brightness of the true Light, grant that we may fully know the mysteries of that Light here on earth so that we may someday come to the

fullness of his joys in heaven, in Jesus' name: pray. Amen.

HYMN: "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

THEME: To be read by a leaguer.

TOPIC: Candlelight service conducted leader.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Lord, make us instruments on which is played music of peace, love, tolerance. Help us to be lambs guiding others within the beam of thy light of love which ever shines down upon us. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "Follow the Gleam." not available, sing, or leader may read, first verse of Hymn 386, CSB ("Shine Thou upon us, Lord").

### Theme

The theme of our service is light—the light which Christ brought and the light we can be, shining in a darkened world.

Light takes many forms in people's minds. In very early times, man used fire for heat, for cooking, and for light in his dwelling, no matter how crude it might have been. Today we have light at the flick of a switch.

What significance does light have in the Bible? From the very beginning of the scriptures, Genesis 1:3, all the way through to Revelation, light symbolizes the presence of God. The creation of the world is described as a separation of darkness from light, and this was done as distinguished from darkness, or night. Israel, in her wanderings in the wilderness, was conscious of God's presence through the pillar of fire which hovered over the tabernacle. Down through the years of the history of the Jewish race, God was a light to the path of the faithful. It is understandable, therefore, that when God sent his Son, he would be



ibed as the Light of the World, to bring salvation to those who would accept him.

You may know Jewish families who celebrate the Feast of Hanukkah each year around the end of November or the beginning of December. Hanukkah means rededication and goes back to about 165

B.C. After a three-year period during which sacrifices had been offered to the Olympic god Zeus in the temple at Jerusalem, the temple was cleansed and rededicated. Lights burned in the temple and in homes for a period of eight days by way of celebration—hence the Feast of Lights, still observed, down through the centuries to the present day.

As Christians, we do not have a Feast of Lights. To us, Jesus is the Light in our lives. In our churches the candles on our altars serve to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World. If we follow him and serve him, we will feel the influence of his presence throughout our lives, and we can truly be lights, shining from our corner of the world.

### Candlelight service

LEADER: There was unrest in the towns and cities throughout Judaea. The Romans were imposing new taxes on the Jews. Hots of people gathered on street corners to discuss this new means of forcing more money from the already over-burdened people of Palestine.

In a little carpenter shop on a small street in Nazareth, Joseph and his wife Mary were discussing the news. For them it was particularly bad news, for they were anticipating the birth of a child. The Roman governor had decreed that each man must go to the city of his birth to register and pay a tax. Courageous Mary, not wishing to be separated from her husband of a few months, told Joseph that she would make preparations for the long journey. It was 85 miles over rough roads from Nazareth south to Bethlehem, Joseph's birthplace. (*Show map*). Joseph was able to get a donkey for Mary to ride, and he walked beside her, guiding the little animal over the smoothest places in the road.

The little town of Bethlehem was crowded when they arrived. Like Joseph, many others had come from near and far to pay the required tax. It was disappointing to find no room at the inn—no place to spend the night and to rest their weary bodies after the long journey. Joseph began to be anxious for Mary. Where could he take her? No room at all in the inn!

Finally, the innkeeper suggested that they could sleep on the hay in the adjoining stable. At least it was a place to rest. Joseph arranged the hay into a comfortable bed for Mary. And there, during that winter night, in the little town of Bethlehem, far from home, the baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger there in the stable. This was the prophesy of Isaiah fulfilled.

LEAGUER: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace". (*Isa. 9:6*)

LEADER: God sent his Son as a tiny babe—to grow into manhood, to become the Light of the World. John tells us, in the eighth chapter, 12th verse, that Jesus said:

SECOND LEAGUER: I am the light of the world: He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.

LEADER: As we come to another Christmas season to celebrate the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem, let us rededicate ourselves to serve our Lord and Master in the days to come.

At this point the room should be darkened and the candles in the circle should be lit. The Leader lights his candle from one of the candles in the star and lights the candle of the person nearest him, who in turn lights the candle of the person next to him; and so around the room, until the entire circle is alight.

While candles are being lit, a leaguer may read Matthew 5:14, 15 and 16.

LEAGUER: "Ye are the light of the

world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

*When all candles are lit, LEADER continues.*

**LEADER:** Our circle of light signifies God's ever-encircling, never-ending love. Within the circle is the star which guided the wise men to the manger at Bethlehem to see the Son whom God sent to be the Light of the World.

How can we make our light shine? Christmas is a time of giving—not just of gifts. God gave us his Son. We can give of ourselves. Perhaps you know

someone who is ill or an old person alone and needing a bit of cheer.

During the coming week, let us look for someone whose Christmas we can make a little brighter. A tiny gift, a card or even just a cheery visit will be more welcome than we realize. And not only at Christmas, but all through the year by doing little acts of kindness in the world around us, we can make of ourselves shining lights.

### Bible readings

To be read during week previous candlelight service. Make copies and distribute to leaguers the Sunday before.

Sunday—Isaiah 9:2-7; Monday—Psalm 27; Tuesday—Luke 1:46-55; Wednesday—John 3:16-21; Thursday—Luke 2:1-20; Friday—Matthew 2:1-10; Saturday—John 8:12-16.

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